DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 058 RC 015 535

AUTHOR Demmert, William G., Ed.
TITLE A Southeastern Conference on Native Education. Report (Juneau, Alaska, April 11-12, 1983).
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 67p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Alaska Natives; *American Indian Education; Cross Cultural Training; *Cultural Background; Cultural Education; *Curriculum Development; Early Childhood Education; Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Family School Relationship; *Relevance (Education)
IDENTIFIERS *Alaska (Southeast); Haida (Tribe); Tlingit (Tribe)

ABSTRACT

Representatives from villages, Native organizations, and educational institutions were participants at a conference that explored barriers encountered in the education of Southeastern Alaska Native students, identified problems, discussed solutions, and developed recommendations. The conference was the result of a concern that a major problem in Alaskan education was the number of Alaskan Native students dropping out. The report contains twelve presentations by individuals actively involved in educating Alaskan Native students. The presentations focus on problems of Native students in public schools, accomplishments and criticisms of Native Alaskan education, development of cultural identity among the Tlingit people, Native American curriculum development, role of private institutions, personal accounts of cultural background and cross-cultural schooling, overview of current research on Native education, and accomplishments of the Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement. Four conference themes emerged: the importance of the family in the educational process, the need for more early childhood education, the importance of schools which reflect the cultures of their students, and the importance of cultural integrity, character, and morality. Thirty-seven recommendations drawn up by discussion groups are grouped under topics of culture and identity, family responsibility, educational curriculum, cross-cultural settings, role of private colleges, and educational problems and strategies for change. A concluding statement summarizes events in Alaskan eduction relevant to Native Alaskans during the year and a half following the conference. (LFL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED264058

A Southeastern Conference On Native Education

April 11 - 12, 1983

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
William H. Demmert
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

RC015535

NOV 1985
RECEIVED
ERIC/CRESS

A Southeastern Conference On Native Education

April 11 - 12, 1983

Edited by William G. Demmert

A REPORT ON

A SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE ON NATIVE EDUCATION

Held at the University of Alaska-Juneau Bill Ray Center
April 11-12, 1983

Sponsored by

University of Alaska-Juneau
11120 Glacier Highway
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Alaska Native Brotherhood Grand Camp
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Alaska Native Sisterhood Grand Camp
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Sealaska Heritage Foundation
9085 Glacier Highway, Suite 301
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Tlingit & Haida Central Council
320 West Willoughby, Suite 300
Juneau, AK 99801

Juneau School District
10014 Crazy Horse Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

Edited by

William G. Demmert, Jr., Ed.D.
Spring 1985

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Foreword		ii
I.	Dr. William G. Demmert, Jr., Problems Encountered by Native Students in Public School Settings	1
II.	Keynote Addresses	
	Hakim Khan, Acting Director, Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education	7
	Dr. Marshall Lind, Commissioner of Education (Past), State of Alaska	11
III.	Presentations	
	David Katzeek, Director, Sealaska Heritage Foundation	16
	Edward Thomas, Director, Ketchikan Indian Program	21
	Dennis Demmert, Director, Indian Studies, University of Alaska-Fairbanks	26
	Isabella Brady, Executive Director, Sitka Native Education Program	30
	Fred Bigjim, Assistant Professor, Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka, Alaska	35
	Dr. William G. Demmert, Jr., Director, Center for Teacher Education, University of Alaska-Juneau	37
	Emma Widmark, Grand President (Past), Alaska Native Sisterhood, Juneau, Alaska	44
	Dr. Alexander Hazelton, Chief, Office of Research and Assessment, Alaska Department of Education	49
	Christina M. Reagle, Office of Research and Assessment, Alaska Department of Education	54
IV.	Recommendations	57
V.	Concluding Statement	60

FOREWORD

A conference held on April 11 and 12, 1983, at the University of Alaska-Juneau brought representatives from villages, Native organizations, and educational institutions together to explore barriers encountered in the education of Southeast Alaska Native students. The specific focus of the conference was to identify problems, to discuss a variety of options for resolving those problems, and finally to develop a list of recommendations. The group met in a general session to review the purpose of the conference and to listen to a series of major papers presented by individuals actively involved in educating Native Alaskan students. The participants then divided into seven discussion groups, one for each paper presented, with the charge of analyzing the report, discussing its implications, and presenting a summary of the discussion and a list of recommendations.

This conference was the result of a concern expressed by the then Commissioner of Education, Marshall Lind, that one of the major problems in Alaskan education was the large number of Native students dropping out of high school in the urban communities. In addition, Native educators expressed a concern that larger numbers of Natives should be continuing on to college and the professions. The Director of the Center for Teacher Education, University of Alaska-Juneau, met with representatives of each of the sponsoring organizations and select Native educators in Southeast Alaska to organize the conference and develop a list of problems as the group viewed them. A conference of this type had never been held in Southeast Alaska before, and the members of the planning group felt a meeting of this type was both timely and important to stimulating a meaningful dialogue between the Native community and the education community.

The importance of the conference was clearly established by the individuals who evaluated the various parts of the conference. On a scale of one to five, with five high, an overwhelming majority rated the presentations at the four and five levels in the following areas: quality of speakers, appropriateness of information, information presented, quality and usefulness of the handouts, immediate value of information, and long-term value of the information.

Virtually all respondents to the questionnaire felt that a follow-up conference was in order, that the conference was valuable, and that the recommendations were worth considering. Three themes stood out as important to the conference participants. These were (1) the importance of the family in supporting the educational process, (2) the need for more early childhood education opportunity for young children, and (3) the importance of schools reflecting the cultures of the students attending those schools.

This report includes an overview of problems encountered by Native students, a section on the recommendations agreed upon by the various groups, and a concluding statement. The report is not intended to provide answers to all the questions a reader might have on what to do or not do when working with Native students. Rather, this report continues the dialogue started at the conference and encourages educational systems to adjust their programs to provide greater educational opportunities for their Native students and, in

so doing, improve opportunities for other students attending public schools in Alaska.

I wish to thank the individuals who contributed to the planning of the conference as well as those who participated in the conference as presentors, members of the audience, or as discussion leaders and discussants. Special thanks to those that saw this conference as a place to begin a dialogue for improving opportunities and quality in the educational system which Native Alaskan students attend.

I would also give recognition to Art Petersen who helped clarify the meanings of the comments and to Mary Elsner who spent many hours preparing the text.

William G. Demmert, Jr., Ed.D.

I. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY NATIVE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTINGS

Dr. William G. Demmert, Jr.
Dean, School of Education and Liberal Arts
University of Alaska-Juneau

Problems encountered by Native students in public schools in Alaska may or may not be similar to problems encountered by other students elsewhere, minority or otherwise. This broad spectrum was not addressed, for the focus of the conference was on Southeast Alaskan Native students.

Initially, a group of five individuals sat down and identified problems as they viewed them. These five persons had a variety of experiences, first as Native students attending either urban or rural schools in Southeast Alaska, and then as practitioners serving as teachers or administrators in Alaskan schools. The problems identified are based on experience rather than factual information gathered in any systematic or scientific manner.

The group felt there were many teachers in Alaska who did not know how to work effectively with Native students. The experiences of the group members indicated that teachers were insensitive to Native needs, that there was still much stereotyping of Native students, that there was a lack of Native teachers and school administrators in the school systems, and that there was a general lack of knowledge about the accomplishments of Natives in Alaska's history.

The problems of substance abuse among students, especially alcohol, pot, and cocaine, were reviewed. Identity conflicts among some Native students, especially lack of knowledge about Native traditions and customs, conflicts about Native/non-Native traditions and customs, lack of knowledge about family/extended family/clan matrix, historical development of Southeastern Native tribes, and clan lineages--were all viewed as informational voids.

The importance of family involvement in the educational process was clearly seen as crucial to a young person's academic success. Things like parental encouragement for schooling, the understanding of one's role in the educational process, school versus family responsibilities, expectations for schooling and life, and positive versus negative attitudes were all identified as important aspects of schooling that parents must be attuned to.

Schools were seen as not providing accurate Alaskan and Native history, nor were teachers placing enough cultural focus on the performing arts, traditions, or oral history. There is little integration of culturally relevant material to regular courses, let alone any special focus on specific areas important to the Native community.

The consensus was that the effective schooling movement and the practices with evidence of effectiveness are all important to learning and relevant for the Native student. Research opportunities, effective practices identified for Native students, parenting, early childhood educational opportunities, and other support services are all necessary but inadequate.

Various impressions surfaced. They indicated a lack of direction among Native students; a feeling that a proper role has not yet been defined for them; that the realities of the village corporations, the regional corporations, the interaction with state government and foreign nations have not yet come to rest; that others were taking care of the problems and that there was no immediate need to prepare Native students to assume the responsibilities for activities in those areas.

Also highlighted was the importance of proper nutrition for expectant mothers, newborn infants, and growing children and the positive impacts proper nutrition has on student success. Prenatal care, eating habits, and timing were viewed as important. Health problems in the areas of hearing, vision, and oral hygiene were recognized as influencing one's ability to succeed. Also identified as priorities were the hyperactive child, tension, and the need to understand what is necessary to combat problems in such areas.

Finally, it was perceived that the needs of exceptional students are not being adequately met. The gifted and talented scholar or athlete was trapped with the average, and the handicapped was striving for recognition and proper service. Identified as clearly needing attention was the need for the school as well as the out-of-school environment to adjust its activities and situations to accommodate students outside of the norm.

Formal Findings

Scientifically gathered information on problems of Native students, or for other minorities, generally tells us many of the same things that the intuition and experience of the Native practitioners described. Some of that information has been presented in studies by educators/researchers and is worth describing briefly.

There is general agreement that cognitive learning/mapping styles are different for individuals as well as for groups of people, depending upon their experiences and the environment in which the person or group lived. In the case of the Native from Southeast Alaska, participation in a subsistence economy (trapping, commerical fishing, community/group ventures, and learning to survive in a rural environment) has significant impact on how one views the world and how one works through problems.

Learning how to cope with the elements—the wind and rain, heavy seas, damp cold, and occasional snow—requires a certain outlook on life and requires the development of certain kinds of skills. Rural isolation for the group as well as for the individual and what that means with regard to knowing every person for miles around, as well as knowing the strengths and weaknesses of individuals in the group, causes the development of certain characteristics that may be common to rural Alaskan residents. Appreciation of nature's many moods, from the stillness of a peaceful day to the rage of a storm, all influence a person's character. The awareness that certain skills, knowledge, and judgment affect the safety of a group or individual develops a certain kind of personality. Selection of leaders and their survival (their ability to attract a following for a particular activity) require certain qualities not consistent with how leaders are selected in

other settings by other people. Relationships between clans as well as within clans influence how one is treated and how one treats another person. Traditional attitudes toward raising and training children, though not widely practiced, still informally influence what an uncle, aunt, or parent does.

In order for teachers to be effective with their rural students, they must understand the parents, the members of the community, and the students themselves. Teachers are not currently trained to do that. The ability to pick up that knowledge quickly depends upon the teacher's willingness to watch and learn, how long they have been teaching in that setting, or whether they come from that setting.[1]

Linguists are telling us that what people say, how they say it, and what they mean when using a common language like English may have different meanings for different groups that use the language. Experiences in infancy and early life determine how people view language, how they think language should sound, and how they should act. Group culture determines many acceptable or unacceptable language practices, such as waiting your turn to speak, interrupting while another person is still talking, pausing between comments, determining the various structures of written as well as oral language, determining the social implications of a dominant speaker versus listener, and listening behavior. All of these language practices are

---

[1]Personal observation and experience supported by the following studies:

Grubis, Steve, Lost on the Tundra: Searching for Teacher Effectiveness, unpublished paper.

Ogbu, John U., "Cultural Discontinuities and Schooling," Anthropology and Education Quarterly, Vol. XIII, No. 4, pp. 290-307, Council on Anthropology and Education, 1982.

Philips, Susan U., The Invisible Culture, Longman, New York & London, 1983.

Stearns, Robert D., "Culture, Cooperation, Community and the Alaska Native Classroom," Alaska Native News, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 10-13, February 1984.

Wauters, Joan K. and Janet Merrill, Exploring Learning Styles of Minority Students, unpublished paper presented at the 17th Annual Conference, Western College Reading and Learning Association, April 5-8, 1984, San Jose, California.

various and have implications for the teacher and impact on student success in the classroom.[2]

Judith Kleinfeld, in her publication Effective Teachers of Indian and Eskimo High School Students, points out that her work suggests at least two fundamental characteristics that distinguish effective teachers of Indian and Eskimo students from ineffective teachers. A high level of personal warmth, especially warmth communicated nonverbally through facial expression, body proximity, and touch, was the most important (there might well be differences in personal preference among individuals and groups). A high level student achievement in the classroom, expressed as part of a teacher's personal concern for the student, was second.[3] In 1976, Dr. Don Davies, a past U.S. Deputy Commissioner of Education, reinforced the position that school improvement occurs only when the educational consumer (student, parent, and community member) has a strong, honest part in setting policy and making decisions.[4] The theory behind the requirements for strong parent committees in the Indian Education Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-318 as amended) and some of the findings to date support that position.[5]

In the University of Alaska Magazine, Dr. Ted Mala, Professor of Biological Sciences, University of Alaska-Anchorage, reiterates the threat alcohol poses to infants before birth. He states that ". . . drinking alcohol during pregnancy can and does increase the possibility of producing a baby with mental or physical anatomical defective trait(s)." He goes on to point out that "chronic maternal alcoholism is responsible for one-third of all cases of mental deficiency in the world." "Alcohol can and does affect brain cell functions."[6]

---

[2]Hermans, Marge, "Linguist Traces How People Learn Language, Culture," Alaska Education News, March 1984, p. 3.

Philips, op. cit., throughout.

Scollon, Ron and Suzanne B. K., Literacy as Interethnic Communication: An Athabaskan Case, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, January 1979 (unpublished paper).

[3]Kleinfeld, Judith S., Effective Teachers of Indian and Eskimo High School Students, Institute of Social, Economic, and Government Research, Fairbanks, Alaska, 1972.

[4]Davies, Don (ed.), Schools Where Parents Make a Difference, Institute for Responsive Education, Boston, Massachusetts, 1976, p. 8.

[5]Hearings before the Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate, Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 659, April 28-29 and May 6, 1971, Part 4 (throughout).

[6]Mala, Dr. Ted, "Alcohol Use and Pregnancy Don't Mix," University of Alaska Magazine, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 32, Spring 1984.

We are also being told that recent studies of working parents indicate children with working mothers tend to have lower achievement, especially in reading and mathematics achievement scores.[7] A study of family involvement in schooling among young Japanese and Taiwanese students shows advantages in schooling as early as the first grade.[8] Dr. J. David Hawkins just completed a study showing that schools, especially what happens in the classroom, can make a difference. His study showed higher math scores on California Achievement Tests, fewer suspensions and expulsions, positive attitudes about school, and higher expectations for their future education.[9] Dr. Theodore Sizer, past Dean of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, and author of Horace's Compromise, pointed out in a recent speech and article that schools work because the people driving them are able. Nothing else, ultimately, is very important. In a recent speech to a group of students at the University of Alaska-Juneau, Harold Raynolds, Commissioner of Education in Alaska, emphasized that it was important to establish a reason to learn among children (and probably parents). I think he is correct. The reasons over what makes a difference are still cloudy for members of the Native community, and members probably need, at minimum, to promote reasons important to their survival. In a recent study of an Athabaskan school, Carol Barnhardt, Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, looked at a school totally staffed by Athabaskan teachers and found that there were some subtle differences in their various teaching styles that appeared more compatible with the learning styles of the students served. She found that the rules for some of their actions were different than rules generally governing teachers from outside the community. She pointed out that there was much to learn about differences in teaching styles between teachers native to a community and teachers from outside the community in rural Alaska.[10]

In 1981 a U.S. Department of Education impact study of Indian education programs (funded under Title IV, P.L. 92-318, Parts B and C) found that both early childhood education programs and bilingual/bicultural education programs improved students' academic performance, increased their interest and activity in community affairs, improved their self-images, and improved their attitudes toward education.[11] The important point here is that

---

[7]The School Administrator, Vol. 41, No. 5, pp. 37-38, May 1984.

[8]Juneau Empire, June 18, 1984, p. 13.

[9]Seattle Post-Intelligencer, March 30, 1984, p. C5.

[10]Barnhardt, Carol, "Tuning-In: Athabaskan Teachers and Athabaskan Students," Cross-Cultural Issues in Alaskan Education, Vol. II. Edited by Ray Barnhardt, Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, 1982, pp. 144-164.

[11]An Impact Study of Parts B and C Programs and Projects funded under Title IV, P.L. 92-318, The Indian Education Act, U.S. Department of Education, April 1981, pp. III-18 to III-19.

interest and involvement in educational programs by parents and community members are generally viewed as prerequisites to better student performance. Improved self-image by students and parents alike appears to influence student success.

The importance of the early childhood research base and the effects of preparing a young child physically, culturally/socially, and intellectually cannot be overemphasized. In addition, the research findings on effective schooling practices all hold the promise of increasing the success of students generally.

II. KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Hakim Khan
Acting Director
Indian Education Program

I am delighted to be here with you today as a representative of the U.S. Department of Education. The Secretary of Education sends you his greetings. He is very committed to the Indian Education Programs and is proud of what they have been able to accomplish.

As a result of an authoritative national study, the Congress of the United States of America passed the Indian Education Act in 1972. The study clearly indicated that Indian students were performing below other groups and had special cultural and linguistic characteristics which affected their ability to succeed in school. These characteristics include language difficulties, cultural expectations of children which affect classroom behavior, teacher perceptions, and lack of parental involvement in the educational planning for their children.

During the last nine years, significant progress has been made as a result of the Indian Education Act. The Act, for the first time in the history of Indian education, has provided an opportunity for the parents of Indian children to take part in the educational process, from planning projects to the successful implementation of those projects. An echo heard from several studies from 1928 to 1969 was realized through the Indian Education Act.

Accomplishments

Since the passage of the Indian Education Act in June 1972, much has been accomplished through the programs authorized by the Act to meet the special educational needs of Indian children and adults.

Funds for Part A of the Act first reached the schools in the year 1973-74, with an appropriation of $11 million. The fiscal year 1982 appropriation was $54,960,000. Along with an increase in the level of funding, the number of participating school districts increased from 435 in the first year to 1,113 in fiscal year 1982. The Part A entitlement program reached some 305,000 Indian children in fiscal year 1982, an increase of about 169,000 since the program began.

Under the Part A discretionary grant program (of the 1972 Indian Education Act) set aside for Indian-controlled schools, 10 schools located on or near reservations were funded in fiscal year 1972. This number increased to 32 schools in fiscal year 1982.

The Report to Congress on the Annual Program Audit for Fiscal Year 1981 concludes that Part A projects are meeting the special educational needs of Indian children and are of substantial quality. As evidence of success of the Indian students involved, the Report notes increases in test scores, increases in school attendance rates, and decreases in the rates at which Indian students drop out of school.

In the first year of the Indian Education Act programs, 51 Part B grants were awarded for a total of $5 million. In fiscal year 1982, $14,880,000 supported 71 grant awards, 161 fellowships, and 5 Resource and Evaluation Centers.

The Part B projects have promoted the ability of Indians to become educated and productive citizens and exercise leadership in Indian communities. A recently completed study, The Tracking of Higher Education Students Supported Under the Indian Education Act, reported that the Indian Fellowship Program has a 68.8 percent completion rate for individuals earning degrees, compared with the 18 percent completion rate for all Indian undergraduates reported in a 1978 General Accounting Office study of Indian college students. Of the fellows who earned degrees, 96.5 percent were employed after graduation.

The Part B educational services program is serving approximately 3,300 students through such activities as tutoring, bilingual-bicultural education, early childhood education, guidance and counseling, remedial basic skills, dropout prevention, and career education. Several projects have demonstratda high degree of effectiveness. For example, one urban alternative school reports an absentee rate significantly lower than that for the public school system in the same city (5.8 percent compared to 22 percent). All professional staff at the school are certified and licensed by the state, a high percentage of graduates continue their education at colleges and universities, and the names of more than 100 students from a variety of tribes are on a waiting list to attend the school.

The Resource and Evaluation Centers were in their first year of operation in fiscal year 1981. The Centers conducted 210 workshops, including two national conferences; made 713 site visits; developed and distributed technical assistance guides for 1,198 Title IV projects; developed management, evaluation, and project design standards; and coordinated technical assistance services from more than 75 regional and state education agencies.

The Part C program has also grown considerably since a total of $500,000 was awarded to 10 projects in fiscal year 1973. In fiscal year 1982, 50 awards were made for a total of $5.2 million, reaching over 15,700 participants.

The desire and need for educational programs for Indian adults is documented in a 1981 study, The Impact of Projects Funded Under Parts B and C, which reported that most of the participants enrolled in Part C programs were seeking to update their educational level and to improve their chances of obtaining better employment. The study concludes that during fiscal year 1971, 72 percent of those enrolled in Part C basic education projects improved their basic skills, such as reading and math.

Further, in the study The Status of Educational Attainment and Performance of Adult American Indians and Alaska Natives (1981), it was noted that approximately 7 percent of all Indian adults in the nation completed the GED requirements primarily from programs operated by Indian community groups and 8.5 percent received ABE experience primarily from Indian community groups.

Data from a recent national survey points out that over 70 percent of the principals indicated that the Title IV project in their school had improved non-Indian teacher awareness of Indian student needs (77 percent) and non-Indian teacher sensitivity toward Indian students (76 percent); and had increased the Indian-related resource materials available at the school (82 percent) and improved classroom curricula dealing with Indians (70 percent). In addition, over two-thirds of the principals went on to report that students were doing better in school work (68 percent), students were more interested in their education (68 percent), students attended school more regularly (66 percent), and students had a greater appreciation of their culture and the Indian way of life (72 percent). Seventy-three percent of the principals also reported that the Title IV projects had increased the interest and involvement of Indian parents in their children's education at least by a moderate amount.

Indian Definition Study

On December 29, 1982, Secretary Bell submitted to Congress his recommendation to retain the present definition of Indian that is contained in the Indian Education Act. His recommendation was based, in part, on the public comment on the Revised Report on the Definition of Indian, received in response to the Department's invitation to comment, which was published in the Federal Register of November 17, 1982.

With respect to the fiscal year 1983 budget for Indian Education Programs, this Administration is sensitive to the enormous educational deprivations that compelled the Congress in 1972 to pass the Indian Education Act and to the continued need of Indian children and adults for its programs. However, the President's 1983 budget reflects a determination to curtail federal spending across the board and thereby control one source of inflationary pressure on the economy.

Therefore, while the budget request of $51.1 million for the Indian Education Programs for fiscal year 1983 is about a 35 percent reduction from the FY 1982 budget, we believe it is sufficient to sustain the advances in educational opportunity that have thus far been achieved. Under Part A of the Act, $32.2 million is targeted for formula grants to school districts, where more than 80 percent of all Indian children are educated. In addition, $3.2 million of Part A funds are targeted for the Indian-controlled schools. For Part B of the Act, the budget requests $9.6 million to support several smaller but equally important programs designed to increase educational opportunities and improve educational quality for Indian children. Under Part C of the Act, the budget requests $3.4 million to support basic educational programs for Indian adults. Of course, these figures are subject to the approval of Congress.

FY 1984 Budget

In concert with the Administration's overall policy regarding separate funding for Indians not on reservations, the Administration is proposing to terminate assistance under the Indian Education Act in fiscal year 1984. However, Indian students and adults will continue to be eligible for services under other programs such as Impact Aid and Chapter I of the Education

Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. It is estimated that over $250 million will be available to benefit Indian children and adults participating in those programs in fiscal year 1984. In addition, services to federally recognized tribes living on or near reservations will continue to be provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in recognition of the special relationship that exists between the Indian tribes and federal government.

FY 1983 Grants Process

The Indian Education Program's staff are in the midst of processing the applications that have been received for the grants to be awarded for the 1983-84 school year. The slate for the noncompetitive, continuation discretionary grants was completed during the first week in February. We expect the awards for those projects to be made by March 31. The 188 applications received for new discretionary grants were read by the panels of Indian field readers and Federal readers the week of February 7. The scheduled award date for the discretionary grants is April 29. The 1,101 applications received from school districts for Part A entitlement grants are also being processed. We are aiming toward an award date of May 27 for the Part A grants. Through these and other activities, the Indian Education Programs office will continue to carry out its responsibilities for the duration of the Indian Education Act programs in the Department.

Conclusion

Again, I believe that much progress has been made in Indian education over the past ten years as a result of the Indian Education Act programs. Through the effectiveness of the projects that have been funded in the public schools under Part A of the Act and in Indian communities and reservations under Parts B and C of the Act, it might now be possible to secure financial and professional support from private and state sources, as well as from the tribes.

It is necessary to seek out other sources to supplement federal dollars. While we recognize the continued need for support of Indian education, federal resources are limited. With impressive evidence, such as "demonstration models" provided by Indian educators, I believe that non-federal assistance may be forthcoming.

In summing up, I want to assure you that this Administration is concerned about the well-being of American Indians. Through the issuance of a formal policy statement on Indian affairs on January 24, the President committed himself to improving reservation economies so that they will be able to promote self-sufficiency and revenues for essential services. In addition, he has appointed new members to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education to provide advice to the Secretary of Education and the Congress with regard to education programs benefiting Indian children and adults.

Thank you for your kind attention, and I wish you a very successful conference.

Dr. Marshall Lind
Commissioner of Education (Past)
State of Alaska

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you today on a topic that has been a very large part of my life for the past twelve years. When I think back to 1971--the year that I became Commissioner of Education in Alaska--it's hard to believe all the changes we have gone through in the area of education. The area of Indian education is no different. We have seen a great deal of change on that front too. And I believe most of those changes have been very, very positive. Although we quite often encounter criticism about a lack of accountability these days, I believe that the creation of the Regional Education Attendance Areas--the REAAs--was about the best thing that ever happened to this state. The way the REAAs have brought about local decision-making opportunity to the citizens of rural Alaska was revolutionary. The new high schools that we built--in places where high schools had never before been--have been a tremendous plus for us. The fact that rural school Native graduates are doing better as freshmen at the University of Alaska than did the graduates from the old state-operated boarding schools is proof.

We are devoting more and more of our state revenues to public schools than ever before. In the middle 1970s the State of Alaska devoted about $153 million to schools. This year the government is paying more than half a billion dollars, and the Legislature is talking about more than that for the next school year, though not much more. And this is during a time when student enrollment has remained relatively stable, except for a short time during the pipeline construction period when we had a slight enrollment bulge.

Well, we are doing more--more money, more programs, more quality education--but we're going to have to pay for it by answering some hard questions that many leaders around the state are asking. More and more we are hearing from legislators, parent organizations, and other citizens about concerns surrounding questions or accountability. "Prove to us that kids are getting a good education," they demand. "Why are we putting so much money into education and less and less into this state program and that state program?" they ask. "Does education deserve this much?" they want to know. And they have a right to know. We educators are going to have to answer those questions. Some educators may feel annoyed at what they say is turning their attention away from the classroom to the less important issue of accountability, but I think that is faulty reasoning. I believe that the cry for accountability eventually will help our education system very much.

Eventually when all the dust has settled, when we have our accountability systems worked out, our education system will be a much better one. I say that because I also believe that the cry for accountability is basically a cry for better communications. At the risk of oversimplifying a very complex issue, I will state that once we educators have devised a two-way communications system with our communities to develop an avenue for our communities to tell us what they expect of the education system and for the education system to tell their communities how they are going about delivering that

education and how well or how poorly they are delivering it, we will hear a lot less about accountability.

There is one danger with the accountability issue, however, that I wish to warn about. And I think we are already beginning to see that dangerous area encroached upon. As you know, much of the accountability issue at the present time is focused on the rural schools. A few isolated but well publicized incidents--mostly dealing with the unwise expenditure of funds--have been largely responsible for this negative attention. Unfortunately, very few districts, urban or rural, deserve this attention, but they have received it. We need to turn this around. We need to call upon our school districts and school boards to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

If even one school district gives the appearance of faultering from its most important task--and that task is educating our children as best we know how--it will reflect on all school districts and on our education system as a whole. There are many legitimate questions about the accountability of our schools. We have nothing to benefit and a great deal of public confidence to lose by manufacturing public suspicion.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement for all the excellent help they have offered the Department of Education and State Board of Education during the past year. That group--which is chaired by Toni Mallott--was appointed by me in February of 1982 to help identify problem areas, spotlight successes, and suggest ways to improve Native education in Alaska.

That group has identified eight goals and has done considerable work to get a start on fulfulling each. I'd like to mention some of this Study Group's accomplishments:

The group has gone over some of the effective schooling practices that affect Native education and has chosen as their top priority to help correct perceptions of parents and teachers about the expectations of Native students.

The group has commissioned a study of small rural schools and has identified three predominantly Native schools which are considered highly successful. The results of this study were published in a report entitled Achievement and School Effectiveness: Three Case Studies, which can be obtained from the Planning and Research Unit of the Department of Education.

The Study Group is supporting a video project on raising expectations of Native students. The project will involve parents sharing expectations for their children and how these expectations have changed over the last three generations. The project will attempt to show teachers and Native parents how they can influence their expectations for children.

The Study Group recommended and I appointed two Native educators to the content study panels for our Statewide Assessment Project. Appointed were Linda Swanson of Tanana and Eleanor Laughlin of Circle. They have also reviewed our statewide tests, both the math and the language arts, for cultural bias, difficulty, and appropriateness. I might add that the group

found only one item on any of the fourth and eighth grade tests which could be considered a biased item.

The Study Group has entered into discussions with the University of Alaska about their concerns. Those they have talked to include the leaders of the X-CED Program.

The chairperson of the group makes a point of consulting with me on a regular basis and of letting me know the thinking of her group.

All of these things that the Study Group has done and all of the issues and ideas that the Study Group has pointed out to the Department and the State Board have been invaluable. Efforts such as these will cause the advancement of education of Native Alaskans and will help keep education policymakers on track. I applaud the Study Group and all that they have accomplished and their continued success.

I am extremely proud of the State's relative short involvement in bilingual-multicultural education. Earlier this year I had the pleasure to address the Annual Bilingual-Multicultural Education Conference in Anchorage where I heard the Director of the U.S. Department of Education Bilingual Programs say that Alaska is probably leading the nation in bilingual-bicultural education. This is probably right. And while other states continue to take a look at what we have accomplished in this area, our state government has continued to recognize this area of education as well in the form of continual increases in state funding.

In 1976 we were spending $583,000 for bilingual-multicultural education. For next year the Department of Education is asking close to $12 million. I think that level of support will depend on how well our Native leaders convey the success stories of our current programs. Last school year 29 of the 53 school districts offered bilingual-multicultural programs, and 8,000 (or almost 9 percent of our total student population) enrolled in bilingual-multicultural education programs. I think these statistics, coupled with the enthusiasm displayed by those eight or nine hundred people who attended that Anchorage conference, attest to the importance that Alaska places on its Native languages, cultures, and heritage.

While on this topic, I would like to point out a very special project underway in the Juneau School District, which has developed the first scope and sequence curriculum to integrate Native culture in the K-12 classrooms regular subject matter. This curriculum has attracted a great deal of attention, and I hope other school districts soon follow.

Another issue very important to Native leaders is that of early childhood education. This is a very, very difficult issue and one, quite frankly, that we haven't figured out yet. Some time ago, the Governor asked the Department of Education to review its regulations regarding early childhood education. As part of this effort, we compiled a list of preschools and determined that only 33 of 167 were certified by the state. I think that statistic fairly indicates the degree to which we enforce our current regulations for pre-elementary schools. With the help of many people, we

built a new set of regulations, designed around what all involved felt best reflected urban needs and rural needs as well. After holding a number of public hearings, we received quite a bit of testimony, and quite a bit of opposition, primarily from the Christian school community. We're still working on those regulations. We are not sure how we're going to handle them. We're not even sure whether it will be the Department of Education and the State Board of Education that makes these changes, or whether the Legislature will make some changes. Or, really, whether any changes will be made at all. What we are after, and what I am sure you as Native educators are after in this area, is to make certain that children of all ages are getting a good education. I believe we all agree that early childhood education is the basis upon which all subsequent education happens. We must make certain that that foundation is strong.

Another effort we are making to this end in the Department is to revise the Alaska Early Childhood Education Handbook. The Department is conducting a survey of educators to determine what problems are being faced and how to best solve those problems. We will integrate our findings into the revised Handbook.

A recurring issue during my dozen years on the job is one of teacher certification in regards to the rural educator. I believe we have done much to ease this issue, although there remains much to be done. But let me tell you some of the excellent things we are doing in this area.

This summer the University of Alaska, at the urging of the Department of Education Professional Development Steering Committee, will once again hold orientation courses for new rural Alaska elementary and secondary teachers. Students enrolled in each of the three courses in the summer will also do follow-up work during the school year.

Also this summer an Experienced Teacher Institute will be held to help establish a cooperative arrangement between master teachers and teachers new to the state. The goal of this effort is to help teachers adjust as rapidly as possible and help them become effective rural educators.

Yet another issue is that of Mt. Edgecumbe, our very successful BIA boarding high school in Sitka. Just recently at the request of the Governor, the State Board of Education held public hearings to determine whether the school can be used as an educational institution by the state after the federal government relinquishes control. The Board has recommended that the state indeed take control of the school and open it to students who need that type of boarding school opportunity. We currently are awaiting the Governor's decision. There are a number of questions he must answer before any decision can be made.

What are the liability implications if the state takes over the school?

Just who can attend?

Can the state contract with the federal government for a year or so until the state's plans are firmer?

What type of courses should the school emphasize? A general high school education? Vocational education? Gifted education? All of these?

As you can see, much work remains to be done on Mt. Edgecumbe, as there is on many of the other issues I have brought up today. I think we have made tremendous strides over the past years, and I have confidence that we will continue to make great progress. It will be a tougher job as we go about trying to do more with less revenue, but we have done a good job in the past with far less than we have today.

III. PRESENTATIONS

CULTURAL IDENTITY

David Katzeek
Director, Sealaska Heritage Foundation

Introduction

This paper will cover the subject of cultural identity, its place in the educational process, and its importance to a people. This paper is not meant to be an exhaustive study on cultural identity, as it would take a lifetime to complete such a document. However, this paper will attempt to demonstrate how cultural identity can enhance the educational process and the life of a person. Cultural identity in this paper will focus on the Tlingit nation.

Much of this paper is based upon the author's personal experiences and training received from his uncles, aunts, mother, father, grandmother, and grandfather on the maternal as well as the paternal side of his family. However, it must be stated that the majority of this training came from his maternal grandparents. These people are the late James Klanott (Raven House) and the late Mary White Klanott (Thunderbird House). Mr. Austin Hammond and Mr. Horace Marks (both from the Raven House) have also instructed the author on the importance of the Tlingit culture and its place in the educational process.

Finally, it is not the intention of the author to imply that cultural identity is the answer to education but that it enhances one's life and education and that it is important to a sense of belonging.

Definition

Cultural Identity. Webster defines culture as "the act of developing the intellectual and moral faculties especially by education; expert care and training; enlightenment and excellence of taste acquired by intellectual and aesthetic training. . . ." These definitions encompass the Tlingit culture or any other culture. The traditions, the customs, the artistic beauty, the music, the legends, the language, the history, etc., establish the identity of the Tlingit people that settled the Southeast panhandle of the state of Alaska as well as Canada.

Finally, culture is a continuing process--it changes over time. The culture of a people can improve or it can deteriorate and is dependent upon the people and their leaders. Although the above statement might be debated, the fact remains and history substantiates that many cultures have come and gone since the beginning of man.

Tlingit Culture

Prenatal Education. Prior to the birth of a Tlingit child and even while the child was being formed in the mother's womb, the mother would talk to the unborn child, telling the child that it would be successful, that it was a Tlingit, that she loved the child, that the child was to understand and be intelligent, that it was to respect itself and others in addition to other statements that would help in setting a positive environment. The practice was not limited to the mother. The father and grandparents were included. It must be stated that this was a natural process and was not a traditional ceremony. However, it is a part of the Tlingit culture.

Prior to the birth of a child, a name was selected by the grandparents and parents for a male child and a female child. The selection of a name for the child was very important as it would have a place in the culture and history that the child would learn about throughout its lifetime. The child would be named after one of its ancestors on the mother's side of the family.

The above practice has a positive impact on the child's environment by setting up a loving attitude between parents and family. To be wanted and to be loved are important in any culture. To be encouraged and to be uplifted are important to any person. To wish success for any person even before being born helps in establishing an environment that could foster the spirit of success. It might be argued that this is no different than what other parents might wish for their child. However, it must be pointed out that this was not just a wish or hope for one's child in the Tlingit culture but was actually practiced, thus helping in establishing the child's cultural identity. The statement "you are a Tlingit, you are to be intelligent and understand . . ." sets the stage for cultural identity and cultural awareness that was to come after the child was born.

Is the above practice gone? If the above practice is gone, can it be reinstituted? Should the above practice be reinstituted if it is gone? The obvious answer is a positive and emphatic "YES."

From birth to death, cultural identity held an important place among the Tlingit people of the past. This continues today and should continue into the future. The culture continues today with the tradition bearers. Our elders are very knowledgeable about our culture and heritage as Tlingit people and want to pass it on to us so that it can continue into the future if we decide that it will help enhance our children's education.

Early Childhood Education

As in most cultures, when a child is born to a Tlingit couple, it is a joyous occasion. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, numerous relatives and friends would come to see the newborn child; so begins early childhood education.

Early in the morning before the raven sounded, the mother and father would talk to the child in the Tlingit language, telling the child, "You are Tlingit, you are to be intelligent; you are Tlingit, you are to understand;

you are Tlingit, you are to be kind, loving, and considerate of your fellow man." Other positive statements and encouragement would be told to the child during the early morning hours. The child would be told his or her name, what it meant, and so on. Children's songs and stories were told to the child. Many of the stories or legends, as well as songs and music, were used to educate the child. The art played an important part not only as it relates to artifacts but also the performing arts. Children would be taught to sing and dance at an early time in their lives. The children would participate during a traditional gathering of the Tlingit people. The paternal grandfather, as well as all the other relatives of the child, would beam with love and pride as the grandchildren performed. Love songs composed by a member of the child's father's clan would be sung, and the child would be encouraged to perform. Love songs in the Tlingit culture played an important role and still does today.

Early childhood education was and should remain a family practice. The grandparents, the parents, and other relatives were involved. The classroom was in the home, in the smokehouse, in the field while picking berries, on the beaches while gathering clams or other shellfish, around an open fire while cooking salmon. The list of places and activities could continue. Throughout this educational process the structure and the disciplines of the Tlingit culture were being established. Cultural identity was being established in the child's mind in a practical way.

Young Adult Education

When a male child reached the age of a young adult, the mother's brother would take over the responsibility of educating the child. If the child was female, the child's aunt(s) would take over the responsibility.

In the case of the male child, the educational experience would be a very intensive process. Disciplines became more intense. The purpose was to build strength of character and to develop self-discipline, physical strength, and endurance. This was accomplished through hard physical labor. In addition to the physical labor was a practice of taking the young adult male, during the middle of winter when the cold north wind was blowing, to the icy cold water, making him go into the water without his clothes and striking him with tree branches. The purpose of this ceremony was explained to the young male prior to the act. This ceremony was to serve as a focal point in his life when facing difficult circumstances and situations that may seem impossible. Having been touched symbolically by adversity physically, spiritually the soul prepares for hard or desperate times.

In the case of a female child, the aunt(s) would teach the young lady how to be a woman. This would include how to prepare and preserve food, how to provide medical care, how to care for her children, what she was allowed to do and not to do. Like her brothers and sisters, she was taught the social responsibilities of her clan and her people. She was told how important she was to her people and how she was to behave as a young woman. To this very day the woman in the Tlingit culture maintains a high status among her people.

Adult Education

Education in the Tlingit culture did not stop after the person reached adulthood. Education was a continual process--history was taught, songs were sung, legends were told, and all that encompasses the Tlingit culture was taught by the grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives. This type of education established a strong identity.

Cultural Identity Enhances Education

Let me use some personal experience to demonstrate how cultural identity enhanced my education while attending school in the Juneau-Douglas School District.

When we were being taught geography in grade school, I remember sitting in class and the teacher talking about people who settled in various parts of the world. I remember thinking about how the Tlingit people settled in Alaska. I remembered how my grandfather, James Klanott, told me the Tlingit names of various places such as Yakutat, Klukwan, Angoon, Hoonah, Taku, Kake, Sitka, Klawock, Skagway, and Saxman. I remembered the name Chilkoot and Chilkat and other geographic places the Tlingit people settled. When the teacher talked about the courage it took for Columbus to explore, I thought how much courage it took for the people to explore and settle in Alaska. Although I was not given an opportunity to tell about Tlingit geography, I was proud of the Tlingit people. My knowledge made me feel good about me and my people. I am still proud of our people, and it still makes me feel good to know that the Tlingit people settled in Southeast Alaska.

During history classes I thought of Tlingit history or, more specifically, about Thunderbird history. When we were studying literature and music, I thought of our stories and our songs. When we were studying Greek mythology, I thought of Tlingit mythology and legends. When we were studying biology and when we were studying about salmon, I remembered the legend that my grandmother told me about a man who became a salmon and returned to his people and told about the migration of salmon and how they returned to the same stream to reproduce. When we were studying English and speech, I remembered how Tom Jimmy, James Klanott, Dan Katzeek, Fritz Willard, Jack David, and others would stand and give speeches that would encourage and uplift the people that they were talking to. When we took music I remembered how my grandfather could sing, I remembered how Jack David would sing, and I remembered how Dan Katzeek would sing. I remembered the happiness and the power that was contained within the singing abilities of these men and how they treated each other with love and respect. For me to continue would not be proper in our Tlingit culture. I only mention these personal experiences to demonstrate how a strong cultural identity enhanced my education.

Finally, I must state that cultural identity is very important in today's educational process. What is wrong with teaching our children that they are to have self-respect; to respect others; to love one another; to help one another; to have courage; to respect the land; to respect the other living creatures of the land; to have a positive attitude; to let your children know before their birth that you love them and that they will be

successful; to treat each other with dignity; to teach them that their people settled in Southeast Alaska and that almost all the communities were named by their people; that their people knew who they were and did not have any problems in establishing the Alaska Native Brotherhood, the Tlingit & Haida Central Council, the Sealaska Corporation, the Sealaska Heritage Foundation, the IRA Council, the Tlingit & Haida Housing Authority, the Tlingit & Haida Federal Credit Union, and other organizations? I say there is nothing wrong with teaching our children the above—it is our responsibility to make it happen, and we can if we take courage and set our minds to make it happen. We are Tlingit, we are Haida, and we are Tsimshian; let us teach our children we have everything, I repeat, everything, to be proud of.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Edward Thomas
Director, Ketchikan Indian Program

Education in the Traditional Family

This paper is based on the traditional Tlingit family in the lower part of Southeastern Alaska. Although there are many similarities in the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian traditions in family life, there are also many differences. Therefore, it is very important not to generalize this information and not to use it as a basis for comparison for traditional family life in Southeastern Alaska.

The Tlingit elders believed that education of the child began even before birth. The stern culture expected the mother to take extra good care of herself, particularly her health, and it was stressed that the mother's diet was very important. It was acknowledged that the kinds of food she ate determined the kind of child that would be born.

Also, it was expected that the expectant mother pay close attention to the legends that dealt with birth, child rearing, and the importance of family life. In early times, it was believed that the child could actually hear or feel the presence of these important messages that came from the hearing of legends and family history.

Once the child was born, the well-being of the male or female child was the total responsibility of the mother. One of the most important roles in this educational process was for the mother to teach the child the identity of the family hierarchy. The manner in which young children dealt with important members of the family or important members of the tribe was a reflection on how well the mother educated her child.

Protocol was very important in the Tlingit tradition. The child was taught at a very early age to respect elders. Because the elders in the community represented the authority of the community, the child's learning of respect for the elders taught the child to respect authority.

Another important part of the mother's role was to teach the child food-gathering and preparation of those foods, for these tasks were a daily part of the mother's duties, and all children were expected to learn these methods. Also, good health habits and personal hygiene were included in the child's learning experiences.

Because of the close association of the mother to the child throughout her daily life, the child became almost entirely dependent upon the mother to learn communication skills. As the child grew to the age of adolescence, it was expected that the boy child would become the responsibility of the uncle on the mother's side for education and the girl child would remain with the mother and continue her education with her mother.

The uncles were given the responsibility of educating the young men of the family based upon the philosophy that the father may not always be objective nor the son obedient due to the close family relationship. The uncle's participation in the education of the young men of the family was normally based around a philosophy of high discipline and respect for authority.

The uncle actively involved the young men in hunting, fishing, building, survival skills, seamanship, and other such duties that would make the young men self-sufficient. History, art, and protocol were also very important areas of learning. Most uncles were very proud of their finished product, particularly if the young man was aggressive, proud, and a good warrior as well as a good provider for his family. If the young man did not reach manhood with these characteristics, the society blamed the uncle and not the young man.

The father's role in the family was, first of all, to be a family provider and, secondly, to maintain discipline in the household. The father also served as a mentor for his nephews on his sister's side of the family. As one observes the rigidity of this society, it is easy to notice the sensitivity of such a system. If any of the ingredients are missing in the educational system, it leaves a void in the person's development.

Family Role in the Changing Society

Tlingit families migrated from the close-knit camps and clan houses to townsites after the coming of the non-Natives. These migrations led to the breakdown in the family structure. The importance of family teamwork in the Tlingit way of life was greatly diminished. Such a breakdown created confusion in the minds of the family members as to their role in the new society and larger communities.

Children no longer stayed home all day but were sent off to school to become educated. Many Tlingit parents had an unclear understanding of the school's role in their child's education. In most instances, parents completely abandoned their personal participation in the child's education. The child then became completely dependent upon the teachers and the school system for their education. Most parents viewed the school as the complete and ultimate authority in the child's education.

There was a reluctance to interfere in the problems of their children in the school systems. Also, parents felt unqualified to evaluate teacher performance. People from the community were school board members, but almost without exception, the administrators of the school system dominated the school policy-making process. In these early times there was very little, if any, school board training.

Child discipline became a problem because parents expected the school to assume these responsibilities and the teachers and administrators of the school expected the parents to send the children to school with some basic skills in respect for authority and discipline. Seldom did the two get together to decide upon proper approaches to discipline.

Communications between family members as well as communications between the family and the school became a serious problem. Parents and grandparents maintained traditional languages. Children were sent to school and were forbidden to speak their traditional language and learned predominately English. The language differences between the children and the parents seriously weakened communications in the family. This breakdown in communications accelerated the breakdown of the family unit and generally deteriorated the learning process of the children. Children lost cultural pride and cultural identity and became ashamed of parents who relied upon the traditional ways of life and languages for survival. The child's loss of cultural identity and pride created a void in the child's existence which made it very difficult to determine a purpose for education.

Because many of the communities of early times were not large enough to support a school of their own, children were often sent to boarding schools. These boarding schools made it possible for a child to make a quicker transition to the ways of the dominant society. However, these schools also diminished the parent's role in education even more. Communication gaps between parents and the students who attended boarding schools became wider than those who attended school in their own community.

Many problems stemmed from the fact that Native people had a difficult time transferring from a subsistence economy to the monetary economy as we know it today. For example, early family houses were normally constructed quite small. Very seldom was there room for a child to do his homework where he would not be interrupted by necessary activities of family life.

Also, because of the need to earn money by finding jobs in order to support the family, parents were sometimes away from their children and families for longer periods of time than they were accustomed to. This absence led to a breakdown in family structure even more. The pressures of trying to earn money limited the amount of time that the family had together. More and more the family became dependent upon the grocery store for its food and nutrition. The changing diet created more problems for the growing Native youth. A decrease in vitamin D, normally obtained from the consumption of dried fish, seafoods, and wild plants, and an increase in sugar consumption through prepared foods and candies created the serious problem of hypertension in many young Native children. Hypertension reduced the attention span of the child in the classroom and most often led to discipline problems in school.

New Roles for Parents

Modern society is becoming increasingly cognizant of the value of parent participation in the child's education. The Indian Education Act passed in 1972 required the creation and maintenance of a parent committee and the participation of such parent committees in the development of an educational plan, and the monitoring and evaluation of programs. No other act in history has created such parent involvement in the Native community.

In 1975 the Johnson-O'Malley programs, as a part of P.L. 93-638, "The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act," were passed into law, and this new act also required a parent committee. Together, these

acts enhanced parent involvement in the education of Native children. This involvement created a new awareness in the parental community with regard to the value of participation and the value of their child's education. Some parent committees have even established programs that would enhance parent participation.

However, even with all these special programs that advocate parent involvement, to repair the breakdown of the family role in the educational process may take several generations.

When Should Parents Become Involved in their Child's Educational Process?

Recent studies support the theory that care should be taken, for a child's education begins even before conception. Parents should learn about the effects of birth control pills and other drugs prior to their pregnancy because these substances can affect children for the rest of their lives.

The expectant parent should also become acutely aware of his or her personal health conditions, for it is the parent's health that contributes greatest to the child's ability to learn or become educated.

Once the mother becomes pregnant, it is very important that the mother be very aware of the value of a good diet as well as awareness of the effects of smoking and drinking on the developing child. The mother must exercise frequently, for exercise enhances circulation to the fetus and enhances proper nutrition.

Other studies support ancient beliefs that parents who engage in listening activities enhance the child's learning ability prior to birth.

During infancy it is important to once again keep in mind the dietary considerations. Parents should involve the child in awareness exercises so the child becomes more aware of his physical surroundings. Parents must communicate with the child in a normal fashion so the child becomes comfortable with the parent's methods of communication. During infancy the child will develop coordination, and the parents must be aware of the kinds of exercises that enhance such development.

Before a child enters school, and during the kindergarten ages of his or her life, the child should have developed a schedule. It is also important that he or she dedicates a reasonable amount of time to rest. Many students find it very difficult to learn because they do not get enough sleep and the mind is not alert during the times he or she should be learning. These schedules are formed through habit and can be developed only through much practice.

During these development years, the child is acutely aware of the family unit and identifies with the various roles the family plays in his or her development. The child should also be taught to become aware of other things in his or her environment. Trips to the library, playground, beach, and forest are desirable methods of providing such awareness. Parents must take the time to explain new experiences to the child as they are encountered.

During no other period in the child's life will he or she develop as large a volume of vocabulary as he does between the ages of two and five; therefore, it is very important that the parents be actively involved in developing the child's communication skills in a systematic and predesigned format.

Once the child is old enough to enter an institutionalized school setting, the parent should be intimately involved in the processes. Also, the parent needs to discuss with the teachers the parental role in the child's development, finding out from the professional teachers how much time should be dedicated to learning activities in the home setting as well as in the school system.

Naturally there needs to be a continuing high level of parent involvement throughout the child's life in education. A parent should maintain the position of being actively involved throughout the child's school years, even through college. Once the bond is broken and the parent is no longer involved in the child's education, it is very hard to reinstate that later in life. Also, we find that in our society the parent seldom becomes involved in a child's activity except when the child is involved in an extra-curricular activity or is in trouble.

I must emphasize that parent involvement in a child's education must begin early in a child's life and that a parent must be trained to participate in this development. It does not come naturally.

ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION

Dennis Demmert
Director, Alaska Native Programs
University of Alaska

Native education at its worst reminds me in a way of fishing at its best. When fishing is good, anyone can put nets in the water and catch fish. Everyone is busy, and everyone is happy.

In a similar manner, when Native education is bad and people get upset about it, all kinds of corrective programs are spread, like nets over the educational grounds. Each program snags Natives, just as we used to snag humpies, puts them on tally sheets, and justifies its existence.

Bad education, like good fishing, is good business: everybody's busy and everybody's happy, but it's the poor fish that get caught.

My point is this: there is an enormous range and depth to the problems of Native education. I could never fully comprehend the mass of a fish run passing beneath us when I was fishing. All I knew was that, across the horizon, fishermen were hard at work pulling in fish which would support a whole complex industry dependent on their catches.

Likewise with education: I cannot comprehend the impact of formal education on economic or cultural lives of Native people. The geographic range and even our relatively small populations are too great and our cultures too diverse. We are not really sure enough of what we want from education to really understand what's going on. But I do know that formal education is changing our lives.

You have in your packet a list of problems which were identified in preparation for this conference. Depending on the perspectives we bring to bear, the list could go on endlessly. Rather than simply add to this list from my perspective, I'd like to identify a way of sorting out the problems and suggest a way to approach them so we have some impact.

For me, it has helped to see two categories of problems that I'm concerned about. One category has to do with the impact of cultural differences on the education of Native people. There are differences, culturally, between people and which affect our education. I'd like to talk about these.

The other category of problems is the educational system itself without regard to culture and the quality of education without regard to cultural factors.

At its best, the so-called "Western" system of education, formalized into a classroom structure, is not perfect, and that's putting it politely. Before I'm through, I'll be less polite because I think that two of the fundamental problems in Native education are that we not only have cultural

differences but that we also are trying to adapt to a system that is not very good. Alaska has such a wealth of resources that we ought to have the best educational system in the nation, if not the world. I don't think, however, that we have achieved anything approaching the high quality that our financial resources make possible. I believe that our state educational resources have not been fully utilized and that we do not have the high quality system which our resources should have made a reality.

Going back to my first point about cultural differences, I believe that cultural background influences the way we learn. Historically, for most of the time that Native people have been in classrooms, cultural background was seen as something to be overcome. Formal education has openly sought to change us culturally. The kind of change sought has long been described as an impediment, and we certainly did not have cultural knowledge incorporated into our curriculum in a constructive way.

More recently we've seen some change in attitude. In 1946, in the first year I attended Sheldon Jackson School, the school stopped punishing students for speaking their Native languages. The trend has been reversed. We now find an interest in cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge is, in fact, a matter of high interest to some of our educators.

Ironically, however, the changed attitude came at a time when cultural knowledge was tenuous. In 1946, when Sheldon Jackson quit punishing Native students for speaking their languages, the majority of the student body no longer knew their Native languages. This condition was a result of educational policy. Every year we hear about more of our knowledgeable elders who have died and whose knowledge we did not capture.

Another aspect of cultural influence on education which I am greatly concerned about is the influence of culture on the way we learn. I am concerned about that which we now popularly call cross-cultural education. There are differences in the way we learn, based on cultural background; there are differences in the way we respond to formal education; and there are differences in values which influence the educational process (use of silence, responses to mistakes, responses in general, who talks with whom, challenging elders).

Cultural differences are an immense factor in education and learning, and educators do not, I believe, have a good understanding of cross-cultural education. There are two approaches and attitudes I've seen regarding cross-cultural education. One approach recognizes that Native culture has been ignored in education and therefore takes the position that education now ought to incorporate Native cultural knowledge. This may seem fair and legitimate, but my concern about this approach is that our white friends who are professional educators are standing back and letting us do our thing with IEA [Indian Education Act] and JOM [Johnson-O'Malley], with little critical participation.

The educational system is correcting a problem, but our white educator friends have been reluctant to bring to bear the critical development and systematic incorporation or correction, which are an underlying strength of the formal education system.

I find it difficult not to be cynical, and thus it is I call this the compassionate approach to cross-cultural education.

I have two problems with the compassionate approach to cross-cultural education. First, that compassion is not cross-cultural. One Alaskan educational researcher published a paper several years ago which said that to be effective in teaching Native children you have to be warm, friendly, and demanding. That's fine, but that's not cross-cultural.

The education system we're in has some real strengths, and one of those strengths is that the education system has the capability to develop effective education programs. If the knowledge and wisdom of our Native cultures are valid, their validity does not, by themselves, make them effective.

The second problem I have is that compassion implies a superior/subordinate relationship. Implied in being compassionate is that compassion is felt for someone in a worse position than we. Whether we like it or not, it engenders a superior/subordinate relationship.

Teachers do, in fact, have a superior position in classrooms and a certain degree of compassion may be in order, but I expect more from our white friends. I expect respect, not for me, but for Native people.

The alternative approach to cross-cultural education recognizes that culture is a major factor, but this approach looks rigorously for the differences in culture and the nature of cultural contact as it influences our education.

We need to incorporate cultural knowledge into the curriculum. We need to understand the influence of culture on the way we learn. We need for teachers to understand that culture and cross-cultural education are major factors in education.

The other category of problems of my concern is the educational system itself and the quality of education we get.

Within the past two years, all three major news magazines carried stories about the quality of education in America. All three suggested that there were massive problems, particularly in regard to the quality of teacher preparation and, from the point of view of teachers, the issue of student discipline.

Rural residents obtained "local control" in 1976, and they are emulating school board procedures which I don't think are that effective. Classroom procedures in Alaskan villages have a remarkable similarity to classroom procedures elsewhere in the country. A teacher who went to school in Tennessee and was trained in Tennessee will use those.

How do we bring about change and the educational development we want? First, obviously, we need to identify the problems. Then we need to develop some perspective on which of those problems can, in fact, be dealt with and also which will bring about the desired change. We need to know the problems; then we need to set priorities.

Then at this point there is an important strategic approach which we in this room must learn. If we want change, we must focus on bringing about change within educational institutions.

Keep in mind that education has been formalized. Education is provided by specialists who are trained to teach in our classrooms. Decisions about education are made within our educational institutions, and if we want change and constructive development of education, we need to focus on our educational institutions.

David Katzeek asked, "What's wrong with teaching our children to love?" The point I am trying to make is that if love or respect or mutual understanding or other values are valuable parts of our learning, which should somehow be a part of the educational process, it is the educational institutions which decide what will be in the educational process. If we want that as part of education, we must bring about that through institutional change. Think of your recommendations in terms of what the education system should be.

NATIVE AMERICAN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Isabella Brady
Executive Director
Sitka Native Education Program

Statement of problem: What process and composition will assimilate Native American lifestyles—past and present—into the curriculum?

In Southeastern Alaska there are two types of student populations to be addressed. One is the majority Native in a village-type setting, and the other is a minority of 35 to 25 percent or less in an urban setting.

Culture or cultural relevance as a consideration in the curriculum is often ranked as one of the top five issues confronting teachers everywhere.[1] Curriculum is defined as the planned activities of the school, with special emphasis on what takes place between the teacher and the student.[2]

Despite the fact that cultural relevance is established as one of the major issues, it is not really addressed in the curriculum of many schools. If a survey were to be taken, it would probably establish the fact that there were very few, if any, planned activities in the school which would place emphasis on anything that takes place between the teacher and students. This would be particularly true for the Native American. With the lack of these types of culturally relevant materials, the students are more or less stereotyped, and if there are special needs they are not being met.

Where curriculum is concerned, I think we have become too complacent about content, assuming that it is easy to create culturally and situationally relevant materials. I suggest that we all take a very hard look at this assumption and at the materials which are being used in the schools.

Just what is the content, message, and quality of materials which the teachers present to the children?[3] Many times, accounts in texts reveal slanted glimpses into the Indian lifestyle. Words such as massacre, savage, and ignorance are commonly used to depict behavior and character. A more positive approach would be a look into the contributions of Indians to better the way of life, with the goal being understanding and respect.

---

[1]Barnhardt, Ray (ed.), Cross-Cultural Issues in Alaskan Education, Cross-Cultural Education Development Program, Center for Northern Educational Research, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, 1977, p. V.

[2]Hopkins, Thomas R., Lyee G. Elton, Carlee S. Lowry, Curriculum Development in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, A General Discussion, p. 17.

[3]Collier, Malcolm, A Film Study of Classrooms in Western Alaska, Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, 1979, p. IX.

A curriculum on Alaska Native culture should meet the ability of children to understand:[4]

> Our texts place a heavy load on any child who cannot identify with the white ethnocentric point of view. When people feel that their forebearers didn't count in molding the past, they have little chance to shape the future. It is the responsibility of textbooks and other teaching materials to make all children feel their true importance.[5]

To understand the world and the universe, a person must begin by gaining knowledge of the system of things immediately accessible and central to his life at any stage, at any place.[6] However, in history books Alaskan Natives are hardly mentioned at all. This restricted view of history fosters the development of white ethnocentrism by assuming that a superior role for whites is needed to fulfill American destiny.[7]

The State Board of Education should make the adoption of relevant Native American materials a high priority. Currently, the history of the Southeastern Native is told from a generally negative viewpoint; consequently, it will be necessary for qualified Natives to write the history of Southeastern Natives.

The Tlingits in particular had much to do with the shaping of Alaska's history—especially with the so-called selling of the territory to the United States. Yet many great men and women of the Southeastern aborigines are not a part of our textbooks.

If a culturally relevant curriculum is so important, why hasn't it been developed? One reason is that a lack of resources poses a problem when it comes to cultural content. Curriculum guides and instructional materials with American Indian content are hard to find. Those that do exist are mainly single topic oriented.[8]

There are a lack of funds and trained Native writers to develop a culturally relevant curriculum. Again, it is whether this is a matter of priority in the various school districts. There are materials available, but they need to be developed.

---

[4]The Year of Bilingual-Bicultural Education Conference Report, p. 8.

[5]Barnhardt, op. cit., p. 110.

[6]Barnhardt, op. cit., p. 9.

[7]Barnhardt, op. cit., p. 112.

[8]St. Clair, Robert and William Leap (ed.), Language Renewal Among American Indian Tribes, Issues, Problems and Prospects, 1982, p. 45.

Another reason for the lack of materials is that most educators have no background in Native cultures and little in the way of texts, audio aids, and expertise which are available to them in curriculum areas such as math and reading. Although there are books which offer information about Alaskan Eskimos and Indians in general, there is often little written about the background of anyone locally.[9]

The fact that most educators do not have any background in Native culture is a problem that probably accounts for the lack of interest or priority for assimilating cultural materials into the curriculum. There are resources available in most communities but are not used. There is a need to have workshops for school personnel, to have them understand basic facts about Native culture.

There is a definite need for materials development. Some of the questions that need to be answered for that development are:

> Who should develop materials, whether or not materials can be translated from English; how should the materials (once developed) fit into the rest of the curriculum, scope and sequence control, approval of materials by parent committee.[10]

Again, there must be a commitment from the State Department of Education and the local schools to develop materials. The fact remains that language is a key to any culture, and there are many materials in the Native languages that need to be developed. These languages are fast becoming extinct and need to be revived or restored. Time is of the essence.

Actually, the history, knowledge, wisdom, and language of a community and culture are available from the elders, the parents, the hunters, and council members of the community. They have not been brought into the educational process and must be.[11] The local school board will have to determine whether this is a priority for the school district and then back up that priority by budgeting funds.

Other areas need inclusion: current problems and the accomplishments of American Indians. Especially needed is a text on state and local government and their relationship to tribal government.[12]

---

[9]Barnhardt, op. cit., p. 80.

[10]The Year of Bilingual-Bicultural Education Conference Report, p. 34.

[11]Barnhardt, op. cit., p. 18.

[12]Strickland, Larry, Social Studies Need Current History and Contributions of Native America, Social Studies, SPI State of Washington, p. 7.

With the Southeastern Native population moving so quickly into the space age, it is important to include the many key Native people who were or are instrumental in the progress of the Native people. The tribal governments are self-determining some of the happenings in the lives of our Native people. There is a need to understand the meaning of tribal sovereignity and the federal government's trust responsibility.[13]

However the curriculum is developed, it should be remembered that the North American Indian has a deep and abiding reverence for all of nature and living things. He is patient with the living Earth and knows that it cannot be technologically disturbed without damage. That sense of mystery and love that has so permeated his past ought to be the core around which school curricula is designed.[14]

Our forefathers believed in a creator and had a great respect for all of nature along with a good value system. With the loss of our values, many of the major problems we are experiencing today (alcoholism, suicide, unemployment, ill health) are a direct result.

On the physical aspect, the care of the body was important to our ancestors. The food was all natural—direct from nature. Today, nutrition is really big along with physical exercise. We have gone the full circle, back to where our ancestors were in the beginning.

There are many areas where curricula about Native Americans can be developed and should be offered for curriculum credit. They are as follows:

Languages: Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Haida.

The Native American Arts: Dance, music, beading, basket weaving, and carving.

Home Economics: Native food preparation, nutrition, and subsistence foods.

Alaskan History: Contemporary Native issues, land claims, and present day and past leaders.

Social Sciences: Tribal government, Native social structures, and contributions of the Native Americans.

English: Native American Literature, oratory, poetry, and legends.

Science: Alaskan fisheries, logging, early types of ecology and preservation.

---

[13]Barnhardt, op. cit., p. 118.

[14]Sharpres, Donald K., Ph.D., A Curriculum Model for American Indian School, p. 5.

Physical Education: Native American physical activities.

Recommendations for Native American curriculum in the schools:

1. Establish a policy from the State Board of Education to assure funding for the development of Native American materials.

2. Establish a cabinet-level post for Native education to insure that the educational needs of Native Americans will be met.

THE ROLE OF PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Fred Bigjim
Assistant Professor
Sheldon Jackson College

I would like to thank Dr. Bill Demmert for inviting me here today to address such an honorable group. The conference is truly necessary to draw the attention of educators and others who have some involvement with education for Alaska Natives in Southeast Alaska and throughout the rest of the state.

I am pleased to bring greetings from president of Sheldon Jackson College, Dr. Michael Kaelke, and his staff, faculty, and students.

Sheldon Jackson College has embraced a new beginning. The college is looking at new programs to better relate to conditions created by industries and occupations with which the Alaska Natives are intimately involved.

Sheldon Jackson College offers a two-year associate liberal arts degree program in the areas of fisheries, forestry, business administration, and Christian fields. It also offers a four-year elementary education teaching degree. There are plans to expand some of the degree programs, such as fisheries and forestry into a natural resources B.A. degree and offer a four-year degree program in business administration.

Many of you here know about Sheldon Jackson, and I know some of you have attended or graduated from the school. I would like to recognize one of the Board of Trustee members and also a former student of Sheldon Jackson, Ellen Lang Hays. She's here in the audience. For those of you who do not have any knowledge of Sheldon Jackson College, I'd like to give you a brief history.

The school was founded by Dr. Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian minister who came to Alaska as a missionary. It started out in the late 1800s as a training school for Tlingit Indians and was called Sitka Training School. It later became a boarding school, offering elementary education, progressing to a high school program, and eventually in 1962 started the college postsecondary program. In the late 1960s it became a full-fledged junior college, accredited to offer associate of arts degrees.

Private education in Alaska has played an important role in encouraging the view that the public requests and sometimes requires some type of educational credentials to adequately perform jobs. Not only have private schools promoted understanding, but they have also been instrumental in providing the training and education required to grant these credentials. This has been evidenced by the many successful graduates from schools like Sheldon Jackson and Alaska Pacific University.

There is a need to continue such special quality as that offered by private schools of higher education. These schools provide a very important person-to-person link which could be the deciding point in a student continuing beyond his or her current year. This is an important part of what private

higher education schools in Alaska offer Alaska Natives. Private colleges have a more sincere commitment to this personal goal than can be accomplished through an impersonal bureaucratic state system. I am not saying that the University of Alaska is uncaring in its delivery of educational programs. I am saying that a student, without the programs necessary to be assisted, can get lost in a maze of faculty-student ratios and statistics. Alaskans need to be aware that private higher education is just as important as a state-run system of higher education. Caution should be exercised whenever the state system tries to expand its offerings to the detriment of private education.

In closing, we as educators need each other to make sure that programs in higher education are relevant and practical. We also need to continue to support one another in whatever area of higher education each of us is involved in. I would like to say that if it had not been for the support of Dr. Bill Demmert in my efforts to obtain educational goals, I do not believe I would be standing before you today giving this talk. Dr. Demmert has been, in a sense, a big brother as we refer to the term "brother" in Native thought. He has been my mentor and friend, which is what education in the human sense ought to be and why it is so important for the accomplishment of learning in the academic world.

Alaska needs a two-focused system for higher education. One approach should not be focused more clearly than the other. Private education has played an important part of higher education and should not be dismissed or delegated to any secondary or nonfunctional category. Sheldon Jackson College is reaching out to you at this conference and to all Alaskans to continue providing a choice in higher education.

Thank you very much.

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

William G. Demmert, Jr., Ed.D.
Dean, School of Education and Liberal Arts
University of Alaska-Juneau

Effective schooling in a cross-cultural setting, the topic of my paper today, has intrigued me and commanded much of my attention over the past few years. As many of you know, I come from a large family of educators—educators in the sense of teachers as we know them today, with about two hundred years of formal teaching experience behind them.

As a result of that experience, the practical experience I have had the opportunity to enjoy personally, and the experiences of successful teachers as described by the contemporary researcher of effective schooling, I would like to explore some effective strategies that might be important when working with Native children, especially when working with Southeastern Alaska Native children. But before doing that, I will review some of the traditional practices of the Tlingit community that I believe have influenced the way we view the world and the way we learn.

I believe the Tlingit of Southeastern Alaska developed one of the most effective models for teaching young children. The system, developed over thousands of years of trial and error, included principles of educational theory that have survived in other systems and in other cultures. The Tlingit model, simply stated, was integrated into the extended family so that parents, uncles, aunts, grandparents, and other members of the clan all shared in teaching. The system started with the physical and practical preparation of expectant mothers. It included establishment of a linguistical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, and physical base in the young child before it could walk. Formal learning started as soon as a youngster could walk, and the process included explanation, demonstration, practice, feedback/evaluation, and on-the-job coaching until the task or information was mastered. There were no failures.

Young girls were instructed in those things they would be responsible for, including childbirth and raising children. They were taught the value of preparing themselves physically and the importance of diet throughout their growth process. Young girls were also helped to prepare themselves psychologically. Attitudes about themselves and their clan were extremely positive. A young mother had the opportunity of providing a lot of personal attention to a newborn child; she spent up to thirty days with her newborn infant in relative isolation. Feeding, communicating orally and with body language, and cleaning and caring for the infant were all part of that period. The young child spent considerable time with other members of the clan once it moved from isolation with the mother to the community house. Here the grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other children were instrumental in helping to stimulate intellectual curiosity, establish a language base, develop positive attitudes, and generally help a newborn start life in a warm, loving, caring environment.

When a young man-child learned to walk, his training was turned over to a maternal uncle. This more formal educational process began with a daily bath in the ocean. It was felt that someone other than the father could be more objective about the training and more demanding which would allow for a more friendly, warm relationship to develop between the father and son. A young girl's mother, grandmother, aunts, and other members of the immediate clan started her formal educational process soon after she too learned to walk and for the same reasons, i.e., relationships between daughter and mother.

The maternal aunts and uncles responsible for providing their nieces and nephews an education were experts in their own right. The process allowed the student to favor those that had the skills he or she might be interested in learning. Young boys were permitted to use their maternal uncles' tools and equipment without permission. They learned from watching older members of the clan perform tasks. Children were taught to behave like adults of their sex. Qualities like restraining emotion, carrying dignity, and remaining aloof were stressed. After the daily bath and a switching by an uncle to learn to withstand cold and pain as well as develop mental toughness, instruction in customs and history of the clan occurred. It is interesting to note that the children were punished only when they refused to take their daily bath in the ocean or river. At an early age, children were given an outline of what was to be expected of them. There was a strong sense of pride—children were taught they should not bring shame or dishonor to the family.

The education of boys was very practical. They learned to hunt and fish, make and repair equipment, carve in a prescribed manner to invest equipment with spiritual power, and to understand the importance of physical and mental fitness.[1]

Contemporary research and information on prenatal care and the care and training of young children tell us that a child's success in later life depends, to a large degree, upon what happens to him/her during some very crucial early periods of life—from conception to three years of age.

During a child's prenatal period, the diet of the mother has an important effect on the quality of physical and mental development of the fetus. Poor diet or malnutrition of a mother and poor diet of an infant up to twenty-four months of age directly affect the child's brain growth. According to some experts, the child's system never gets a chance to recover. In addition, it is important for mothers not to assume that their bodies have the reserves needed for a fetus, according to reports from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Nutritional reserves are accumulated over a lifetime. "Getting ready to be a mother during a woman's adolesence is almost as important as the actual time when a woman is mature and pregnant." Unless parents are aware of these facts and others (the

---

[1]Personal experiences and information passed on by parents, grandparents, and other members of my extended family.

effect of overeating is almost as harmful as underfeeding), the potential for inadvertently retarding a child's development is frightening. Very little is known about the state of health among Indians. A comprehensive nationwide survey has not been taken, and I am not aware of a carefully done survey for Alaska. However, the health and nutritional status has been described as poor, even precarious in some instances.

The way a mother interacts with her child from birth to three years of age lays the base for a child's major processes, i.e., motivation; intelligence; and evolution of language, social, and emotional development. There appear to be three major phenomena that are crucial to child-rearing practices which usually become fixed by the time a child is eighteen months of age. They are (1) locomobility, (2) language—learning ability and how a mother nurtures it, and (3) negativism and the handling of it. These three phenomena create early child-rearing styles that influence the ten- to eighteen-month-old's future.

During the end of an infant's first year and during the second and third years, the method a family adopts to deal with an increasingly mobile youngster determines, in part, how well a child develops in locomotor ability (walking).

Language skills begin to develop as early as eight or nine months of age, and during the second and third years of life, development moves dramatically ahead, especially in receptive language. Significant differences in linguistic ability emerge by fifteen months of age and become pronounced by thirty to thirty-six months.

A mother who is seriously depressed, angry, or unhappy about life will probably not be able to do a good job of getting her young child off to a good start. Mothers who enjoy their children during the one- to three-year age range, who interact and receive a great deal of pleasure from them, appear to start their children on a successful track. These formative years require mothers who spontaneously grant their children generous amounts of attention and consideration as a part of a natural way of life.

Most families, especially mothers, are seldom prepared to carry out child-rearing practices on the basis of training or reliable advice. This inability constitutes a major injustice to children and parents. It appears that most of the basic foundations for educational and general development receive their shape and quality during the end of their first year. A one-year-old appears terribly interested in exploring his/her world most of his/her waking hours. He/she is ready to expend large amounts of energy exploring. The child is capable of tremendous amounts of intellectual and social learning and of motor skill development in areas such as walking, climbing, and using his/her hands. The child is ready for some fundamental development in both social and language growth.

During the child's second year he/she studies his/her mother, approaches her often, and develops a strong attachment to her. Others count, but in most cases, not as much as the mother. The child also seems to develop in directions that may produce a vigorous, secure, loving, and healthy social individual, or he/she may take other paths during this age. By the time a

child is two, it appears that many basic formative experiences are already behind him. A child's course is revealed on or about the middle of the second year of life.[2] Burton White (Harvard) states that ". . . the mother's direct and indirect actions with regard to her one to three year old child, especially during the second year of life, are, in our opinion, the most powerful formative factors in the development of a preschool age child."[3]

It is important to note that there are differing opinions on the importance of the early stages. Jerome Kagan of Harvard University says ". . . I can say with confidence . . . that an abnormal experience in the first two years of life in no way affects basic intellectual functions or the ability to be affectively normal--to experience gaiety and sadness, guilt and shame."[4] Sheldon White, also of Harvard University, states that ". . . it is now believed that imprinting of the image of the mother occurs optimally at sensitive periods, rather than irreversibly at a critical period as had been hypothesized."[5] He goes on to say that even though evidence supports the importance of early childhood, there is little hard data about critical periods in development--most of it has come from early experience studies with animals and humans. He does state that "the results of the studies do suggest that the immediate effects of institutionalization are greatest between age six months and three years and are manifested by retardation in language, motor, and emotional development. Few long-term effects are found unless the deprivation itself is long term." ". . . No scientific data precludes the possibility of an elevation of IQ through environmental manipulation--nor does any scientific data conclusively prove that it can be done."[6]

Sara Stein and Carter Smith, in "Return to Mom," Saturday Review of Education, sum this up well. According to them, "While it is true that programs for preschoolers have worked because environment does affect intelligence, it is also true that few programs have maintained gains. Environment was not conceived broadly enough; the environment that affects children for all the years of their growth is at home, not at school. A crucial ingredient has been missing. In the words of a Cornell Child Development faculty person, "Any appreciable enduring improvement in the child's development can be effected only through an appreciable change in the behavior of the persons intimately associated with the child on a day-to-day basis." "These persons for most children are parents." The complexity of family

---

[2]Dammert, Jr., William G., Critical Issues in Indian Education: 1972-1973, University Films, a Xerox Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1974, pp. 69-73.

[3]Ibid, p. 71.

[4]Ibid, p. 71

[5]Ibid, pp. 71-72.

[6]Ibid, p. 72.

relationships cannot be reproduced. The bond between mother and child is qualitatively different from the bond between caregiver and baby. No one teacher, no one institution, will see a child from his infancy through all the years of his growth. . . ."[7]

I guess what I am saying is that in order for students to succeed in school, it is very helpful to have had some basic training and preparation in the home. Once this occurs, there is a growing body of knowledge that tells us how to be more successful in the classroom, in the school, and more successful as individuals. In the first part of this paper I pointed out some of the early practices and strategies of the early Tlingit and similarities to current thought in areas of early childhood education. In the area of formal schooling at the elementary and secondary level, I believe there are some basic principles to be met before one deals with effective practices in the classroom.

The educational process must be the root for creating a culture, society, and technology that not only feeds a person, but also keeps him/her caring and belonging. The system must reflect, re-enforce, and further the cultures of the students that attend. The educational system must belong to them; there must be a sense of ownership. The system must have meaning, it should be directly related to what a student will become, there must be expectations, there must be pride in doing a good job, pride in teaching, and pride in learning a task well. At minimum, the culture of the community and its people must be compatible with the culture of the educational system and its students.[8]

Young Tlingit students were taught to be proud of the accomplishments of their forefathers. The feats of living relatives, the legends of the clan and nation, the current social status of the house/family were all sources of pride. Serving an apprenticeship with maternal uncles/aunts, repeating tasks until they were learned perfectly were part of the educational experiences of an earlier time. Uncles and aunts were trained motivators—they could tease, cajole, challenge, as well as serve as an example of what adults did and how they act.

Jerome Brunner of Harvard and Cambridge universities points out that a community is a powerful force for inducing effective learning. Students, when encouraged, are tremendously helpful to each other. He believes that young people in the U.S. society have become so isolated from adults that they do not know the roles available in society, nor do they know about the variety of styles in which they are played. He advocates finding some way of connecting the many parts of society to the phenomenon of school, primarily to keep school from becoming so isolated and communities so suspicious of schooling. Society needs to bring back its sense of values and priorities

---

[7]Stein, Sara and Carter Smith, "Return to Mom," Saturday Review of Education, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 36-40, March 16, 1973.

[8]Dammert, op. cit., p. 33.

in life. It might be important to bring vocation and intention back into the educational process.[9]

Effective schooling research tells us there are some common threads that run through schools that have been effective. These threads include (1) a strong central office that provides leadership, guidance, and enough atonomy for schools to adjust to individual characteristics of the school population and circumstances; (2) a sound staff development program which encourages, promotes, and supports its teachers through cooperative planning and opportunities for university relationships; (3) a strong sense of community, support for student and teacher effort, a climate where academic success is recognized as well and promoted, and high goals and expectations for student learning; (4) sound management practices and structures. The principal provides strong leadership and instructional support, the curriculum is well organized and articulated across grade levels and subject areas, and the school climate is safe, orderly, and conducive to learning; and (5) instructional practices that have proven to be effective are used in every classroom.

These practices include (a) a systematic approach to classroom management, which includes preparation and planning before school begins in the fall; the establishment of expectations, procedures, and routines early and maintained throughout the year; consistent follow-up on expectations as well as a continuous stream of well-chosen and prepared academic activities for both group and independent lessons and work time; (b) the establishment of effective management procedures during the first two weeks of the school year; (c) the prevention of problems rather than the development of special skills for responding to problems once they have happened; (d) the ability to maximize student time on tasks, which improves student learning of basic skills.

Most of what I have just listed makes intuitive sense to teachers. The growing body of knowledge is documenting what they have known or suspected for a long time. People run schools. How teachers, administrators, and students behave in a school setting matters; conduct in large measure determines a school's effectiveness. Quality, and not just quantity, of effort, materials, and time is what counts. The curriculum of the school, which includes both what is taught and how it is taught, is important.

Clear academic and social behavior goals, order and discipline, high expectations, teacher efficiency, pervasive caring, public rewards and incentives, administrative leadership, and community support all help to promote schoolwide conditions for teaching and learning across all classrooms. They are necessary social conditions which help teachers and students to excel as individuals.[10]

---

[9]Demmert, op. cit., p. 33.

[10]Koeler, Virginia, "The State of Teaching: A Summary of Recent Research Findings," Education Times, Monday, April 26, 1982, p. 7.

If we as educators know all of these things, then why do we still fail with so many of our students? We fail because we do not feel good about ourselves. We fail because some parents do not establish a firm learning base among some children. We fail because some parents have not instilled a sense of purpose among their young. We fail because some parents no longer display pride in their accomplishments or the accomplishments of their children.

We fail because as superintendents, principals, and teachers we know little if anything about the people we are teaching; we know little of the culture, history, and attitudes of the people served. We fail because we believe the culture of the school is more important than the culture of the community. We fail as educators because we do not expect much of children we do not understand. We fail because we do not practice what we have learned about effective teaching. We fail because we have not joined forces with parents.

We will succeed when as parents we prepare our children to succeed and when schools reflect expectations in a meaningful way in the right environment.

REFLECTIONS

Emma Widmark
Grand President (Past)
Alaska Native Sisterhood

This is going to be a difficult thing for me to do, to talk about what we had been considering yesterday and how to bring it into today. Many ideas were presented to you, a lot of positions, and now we have to decide what to do with them. I have been trying to sort out in my mind what everybody said yesterday and what is of importance to us as a people. It seems to me the issue is culture and education and change. How to change successfully is the big thing.

The kind of people I come from enjoy new experiences--they enjoy travel, they enjoy meeting new people, and they enjoy gaining new skills. Life for the people I come from is exciting and wonderful, and if they can incorporate something new, they are very willing to do it. I must admit, I was raised until I was eight in a small community that many people would call a village. Some of my favorite people were my grandparents, who couldn't speak English very well. In fact, I got into trouble a lot because I would run off with them and wouldn't tell my parents. My parents were very strict because they were Tlingit. They wanted to know I was safe, and I was running off and not telling them.

One of the things I learned from my relatives was that they were honest in their relationships and they loved us all dearly. They were very concerned that we would be successful in life. They were very concerned that we would know where we were going, that we would be equipped with the proper skills and the proper knowledge. They were preparing us for life, for living. They were preparing us to take the mantle of leadership. We were always taught to be kind to people.

Now as Grand President of the Alaska Native Sisterhood and having been brought up with the philosophy of the Alaska Native Sisterhood, there are some words I feel are key to our philosophy. The first word is <u>love</u>. We are governed by love in our organization, and we try very hard to maintain that in our minds and in our actions, consciously and unconsciously.

<u>Respect</u> is another key word. We always try to treat each other with respect. When we are having a disagreement, we try to remember this respect we have for one another so that when we consider the issues we are respectful of another person's beliefs. I find in my own father and in the members of the Brotherhood and Sisterhood, there is a good deal of respect for people who have a good reason for believing the way they believe, whether we agree or not.

<u>Honor</u>. We honor one another. We pay tribute. It's important to honor one another. It helps in our relationships.

<u>Service</u>. That is one thing we learned in the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood, and it is something I have learned about in my family life:

to serve. My parents told me that we were very lucky to have been economically secure and, because of that, we are to serve. We are to be generous, and we are to be kind and gentle to other people.

Sacrifice. This is something we learned about in my family. Although I never felt I went without anything, I never knew the sacrifices my parents were making. Only as I became an adult did I learn about what my father felt he sacrificed to be active in the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the Tlingit-Haida land suit. For me, it was just a good life, and I was very proud of what my parents and all my relatives were doing. It was not a sacrifice on my part. It was not a sacrifice to have parents that you could be proud of and aunts and uncles you could hold up in admiration and say, "When I grow up, that's what I want to be like." It was not a sacrifice to me. That is something I have learned too as an adult of the organization--we sacrifice for organization and for the efforts we put into the Brotherhood and Sisterhood.

Overall, probably the greatest overriding value is the spiritual aspect of who we are. Spirituality is very important to the Tlingit. So our religion is very important to us. We pray to God daily when we have our meetings. We pray when we begin, and we pray when we end so that our deliberations will have His guidance and will give us the wisdom to do what is correct.

For me, these are the things that I have learned are important in the preparation of life. As David Katzeek was talking yesterday and bringing out these same words, I thought it was just a validation of what I was taught: important values of a Tlingit person and how we should go ahead and guide ourselves. I also learned from my father when I was twelve years old that he had decided he had trained me in the manner that would guide me through life. He would not question any more whether I would know the right thing to do. He expected it of me. At that point in time, he figured I had enough background and enough input from my parents that I would know what was right. He didn't tell me what I was to do; he expected that I would know how to behave. He expected that I would represent my family with honor and respect and show love to my family members and to my people.

I was talking with a tribal sister who is very dear to me, Dr. Mildred Sparks, who is in the Pioneer Home right now because of illness. She told me some other things that I thought were so wonderful about being Tlingit. She told me the first words a Tlingit hears are very important to the Tlingit. We say, in English now, "You will be proud and you will be independent." I thought all my life that was something my father tried to teach me, particularly the independence. He felt it was important to be independent. Sometimes he thinks that I'm too proud.

The other thing she said they do that I thought was really powerful was that when a new child was born, a special prayer was said for that child so that the child will have a peaceful mind. I look at my father and I look at Mildred and I look at who my grandfathers and grandmothers were and I look at the elders we have today, and there is a great peace about them. The peace is not there because they are perfect or because they have always done what they thought they should have done. They have recognized their

human frailities, they accept their humanness, and they accept themselves where they are and they know that they did their best. From these sources come their peaceful mind.

That is something that troubles me about young people today. That peaceful mind is gone. We don't see it. We see the vacillation, the hurt, and the questioning and then not knowing where to go.

The Tlingit values that create a peaceful mind are important. I feel that in the process of becoming civilized we have lost some of our contact with these values.

When we work with young children, I think we need to keep in mind that these are the values of their people and that we need to incorporate these into the curriculum of the school.

Yesterday, Ed Thomas talked about things that brought confusion and brought people into an uncertain stage and what the parents should do and how the family should participate. I know one thing: when we talk about family or parents, I never had just one father or one mother. I had all of my aunts that were there looking after me, directing me, and educating me. My Uncle Archie was also there guiding me. One thing I learned about the Tlingits was the father's role. I asked my dad why he did not discipline more. He said the responsibility of a Tlingit father was to love his children. That's what he showed us, this love and gentleness. He had other responsibilities as a member of his other family, of his side of his clan. But for us, all he had to do was to show us love.

Today, we talked about the first time my father raised his voice at me and about the three times he spanked me. It really embarrassed him that he lost control and became so angry that he hollered at us. I was his most willful, independent child, and I was very fearless. I was not afraid of people or any situation, and this frightened my parents. Three times, I went out and scared them to death, so my father let me know how scared they were. I said, "Dad, there are very few people in the world that can remember the first time their father hollered at them, and there are very few people in the world that can say my father spanked me three times." I thought that was a remarkable record.

Where do we go from here? What does this all mean to education? What do we have to accept, and what is valuable to us? Finally, who has the right to make these choices? Some of these questions I will not even try to begin to answer, and on some of these questions I will try to offer you some thoughtful things or something that might cause you to question what one can ask.

One of the things I would particularly like to look at is the kinds of things we accept—the kinds of education we accept and the kinds of terminology we accept. For me, when I was younger, I accepted all of the kinds of words that were used, like "disadvantaged," "deprived," "deficiencies," "acculturation," "slow learner," and "retarded." I always thought our people were somewhat deficient until I went to college and found out that I didn't know what "deficient" and "retarded" were. And yet as a people we

accepted those words in defining what we were. I learned from an Indian instructor in college that we had a right to accept or reject definitions of what we were and a right to accept or reject words that defined who we were and what direction we would go.

I guess I don't think we are disadvantaged, I don't think we are deficient, and I don't think we are deprived. We are only deficient and deprived when people try to make a non-Native out of us. When we have our own cultures, whether they are Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, or any other Alaskan Native, we have something that is very rich and very touching, and we have much to offer the other worlds that might want to hear.

I would not like to hear anything come out of this conference saying we are disadvantaged, deficient, or deprived. We are a proud people with a rich culture and a rich way of life with much to offer. We have excellent values. We have more than enough love for the whole world. I think that we ought to talk about how we can get our values which are important into the school and into the curriculum and share them with other people who are interested.

Where we go from here is up to you. We have heard a lot of good words, a lot of good phrases, and we've heard a lot of good ideas. In the sixties and early seventies, it was fun learning good ideas, but I feel the pressure of the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood. Enough with ideas; what we need is the right action. The right action doesn't mean just beginning.

The one thing I have learned from the Alaska Native Brotherhood is you have the right ideas and the right action and you carry through to a successful end. That was important, and that is what we must do from here. We must decide what is important for us to do. We must write it down well, and we must accept it in our hearts. We must begin the action and make sure it is carried through. It is not enough to be aware—you must be action oriented and you must be responsible enough to make sure it has a successful result or a successful end.

Who has the right to make these choices? I'm not sure who has the right to make any choice in terms of education for the Tlingit, the Haida, or the Tsimshian. I really wonder about that because my father has talked to me much about the formation of the Alaska Native Brotherhood and why it is a success. One of the things I have learned about my culture is that there are certain leaders among us and that there are certain people we listen to and give a lot of credibility to. We trust their judgment, and we trust that they will take us in the right direction. We have a lot of those people to make the choices for us. We have allowed them to take positions of leadership. We have honored them by following. I ask this question of myself, and I ask you, who has the right to make a choice in the direction education will take for the Southeast Alaska Native?

I'm not really sure, but I feel that the interested people in this room can at least begin to encourage people to make those choices and provide them with the options and ideas available to them so that when they do make the choice they will make the best choice possible. I think we have the right to present the options and we have the right to advocate for a position.

I'm not sure in terms of my culture that we all have the right to make the decision, but we can help people make their decision.

A lot of good ideas have been presented to us, and we have a resource of people available to us this morning. I think what we are about to do is come up with good ideas, come up with a strategy for action, and then each of us go home and act. We can no longer be a conference Indian. We have to do something about what we have learned. There is a story a lot of Indians tell: any day you took a rifle and shot into the sky you would hit an airplane taking some Indian boy to a conference. It's true. We have gone to a lot of conferences, and we have all kinds of organizations. I want us to start to act. I hope and pray that the people will feed on the richness of our culture and the richness of our values and look at the educational methods we use among our own people and try to see ways of incorporating them into our school. I think here in Juneau we have made a good beginning. We started last year with the scope and sequence in planning that we did. We were fortunate that the School Board accepted our scope and sequence. Now the real work begins. We need to develop the curriculum. My only complaint is that it is for only one area of study--social studies. I think it should be throughout the entire school in every subject area.

I think what I would like to say today is that we have heard many things. Now is the time to plan for action. When we go home, it is time to act--the time is almost too late. I ask myself, will there be Tlingit, Haida, or Tsimshian people in a hundred years? We have to answer that. We have to answer either yes or no. If we say yes, we must begin the action to make sure that there are these people in a hundred years, or we must take the action to forget any of the cultural values and to go out and become educated and be like everyone else. I cannot accept the second part of it. I want to insure that there will be Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people in a hundred years. I would like to ask you to help me insure that.

Thank you.

CURRENT RESEARCH ON NATIVE EDUCATION

Dr. Alexander E. Hazelton
Chief, Office of Research and Assessment
Alaska Department of Education

Research methodology dictates that assumptions be made about the world around us and then that each assumption, usually in the form of a hypothesis, be put to a test. If the hypothesis fails, it is back to the drawing boards. Researchers find it very difficult just to give up on their interpretation of the world. If, however, the hypothesis is supported by the test to which it is put, it becomes a research football, which must meet further investigation criteria. It is mandated in research circles that the hypothesis under question meet the original test to which it was put by various investigators under similar and sometimes varying conditions. Because of the strenuous mechanism of checks and balances, it is no wonder that research is not the first avenue for which people seek verification or even support for positions.

Much of the research on Native education focuses on the failure of our educational system. Current educational practices are often cited as not meeting the needs of our Native youngsters. The Department of Education has become more and more aware of this failure to meet the needs of Native youth. In 1981 we asked for proposals to review the literature on Native education and bring together those things we know about, or at least are relatively comfortable with as working in educating Native children. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory won the contract and produced a study entitled Topic Summary Report: Native American Education.

What We Know

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory established four hypotheses and reviewed voluminous research literature to establish if these hypotheses could be supported. The four hypotheses were:

1. "Specially funded programs for the education of Native Americans have improved the school achievement of these groups."

2. "Specially funded programs for the education of Native Americans have had measurable (or observable) beneficial effects other than improved school achievement."

3. "Educational programs which are designed to take into account the special cultural characteristics of Native Americans will yield improved school achievement."

4. "Educational programs which are designed to take into account the special cultural characteristics of Native Americans will yield

measurable (or observable) beneficial effects other than improved improved school achievement."[1]

Note that two of the hypotheses focus on Native achievement and two on other observable beneficial effects other than achievement.

The findings of this secondary research on Native educational "practices and outcomes do not lead to a comprehensive set of conclusions about the best approach(es) for educating these students."[2] Isn't that always the case in research!

There are, however, positive outcomes that we would do well to look at in further studies.

Hypothesis 1. A major number of reports identified six factors leading to positive outcomes:

1. Bilingual instruction in the primary grades.
2. Utilization of Native American teacher aides who receive inservice training and deliver mastery learning exercises to students.
3. Using Indian traditions and legends as language arts lesson content.
4. Individualized remedial instruction.
5. Use of the Follow-Through Model.
6. Use of a phonetic approach to reading instruction.

Hypothesis 2. Teacher reports were vague and difficult to interpret. No interpretation of these data was attempted.

Hypothesis 3. Generally, the results of educational programs designed to take into account the special cultural characteristics of Native youth were positive. A number of characteristics seem to run common to many of the studies:

1. Native American student achievement is enhanced by teachers who have high expectations of student performance and whose behavior towards the students is warm and supportive.
2. Native American students are especially responsive to nonverbal warmth, as communicated through facial expressions, close body

---

[1]Topic Summary Report: Native American Education, Portland, Oregon, September 15, 1981, p. 6.

[2]Ibid, p. 9.

distance and touch, and the presence or absence of such warmth affects student achievement.

3. While Native American students often perform well in classes taught by non-Native American teachers, achievement benefits have been noted when these students have exposure to Native American teachers, teachers' aides, tutors, counselors, and to Native American people who are successful in the work force.

4. Instructional programs, which are designed to provide Native language literacy as well as--and prior to--English language literacy, have been found to enhance the achievement of Native American students.

5. The achievement of Native American students is enhanced by open concept school programs which feature self-paced instruction, informal teaching methods, the opportunity for physical movement, nongrading, assessment methods other than tests (e.g., teacher-student conferences), and the use of visual and verbal teaching methods in addition to the presentation of textual material.

6. The achievement of Native American students is enhanced through the use of "cultural instructional models" which emphasize "environmental and cultural materials consistent with Indian cultures and feature activities calling for cooperation."

7. Environments, behaviors, and instructional approaches found to be detrimental to the school achievement of Native American students include teachers with cold, domineering personalities; physically restrictive classroom environments; overreliance on printed materials; activities calling for competition; and activities which focus class attention on one individual who is expected to perform.[3]

Hypothesis 4. Support was found in the studies that these programs "enhance the self-esteem and school attitudes of Native American students, as well as reducing attendance problems, dropout rates, and discipline problems."[4]

The review of the research, although inconclusive, gives support to a number of practices that are worthy of further investigation. The first practice which needs to be attended to is support for instructional activities which can be found in the culture. In addition, programs which focus on teacher preparation for teaching Native students need to be evaluated. The introduction of Native history and culture into the

---

[3]Topic Summary Report: Native American Education, Portland, Oregon, September 15, 1981, p. 8.

[4]Ibid, p. 9.

school curriculum is suggested. As a researcher, I would add that an evaluation of any curriculum needs to be conducted under various delivery modes. Further support was indicated for effective schooling practices for specific cultural groups. And, of course, this secondary research report suggested that well-designed studies with clear focus need to be conducted.

What Are We Looking At?

Ed Thomas and Bill Demmert have already alluded to some of the studies going on in Alaska in the areas of early childhood education and effective schooling. In the case of these areas, we are just starting to get a handle on how to go about researching them. Each is a complex area which requires dissection in order to identify those practices which benefit students. In addition to these studies, there are several others which focus particularly on concerns for Native education.

In 1981 when we administered the Statewide Biennial Assessment, Native students scored in general below the non-Native students. Although disappointing, it was no great surprise; Native students nationwide generally do not do well on written tests. This may be due, in part, to the verbal nature of the Native language as opposed to the written emphasis by white middle class America. Regardless of reasons, Commissioner Marshall Lind requested that the Department offer a formal input into Native education by Native educators and that information be gathered on where Native students are doing well. The Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement was formed, but more on that later. One of our concerns is where are Native students doing well and what do those schools hold in common. Because of funding, this study was restricted to three schools; however, these three schools held several practices in common:

- A major portion of their time was on instruction, with few housekeeping duties.
- Students spent a great deal of "time on task."
- Diagnostic testing was used for instruction.
- Discipline was upheld in all schools; however, it differed from school to school.
- The principal served as the instructional leader, devoting the major portion of his/her day to academic leadership.
- School climate was warm and accepting.
- Expectations for students were held high by parents, administrators, teachers, and students.
- Reinforcement was prevalent in all three schools; e.g. homework, daily rewards for good work, etc.

- All schools were involved with the community; e.g., parent-teacher conferences, school activities sponsored by the community, other parent involvement was evident.[5]

A second study we are supporting is an effective teacher study by Judy Kleinfeld at the University of Alaska. This study is just getting underway, but basically Judy plans to identify exceptional teachers in rural Alaska and to try to identify those characteristics they hold in common.

A third piece of research we are looking at is mastery teaching. This is an individual instructional approach which offers each student the opportunity to master, so to speak, a portion of the curriculum before he/she moves on to additional areas.

Finally, we are looking into expectations of students. I mentioned earlier the Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement. Let me introduce Christina Reagle to you, who will describe this group and their project on expectations.

What Needs to Be Done?

I have labeled this section "What Needs to be Done?" because I am truly at a loss. The area of Native education is so broad and offers such a wide area for research that one can be said not to see the forest for all the trees. This morning in the presentors' briefing session, Dennis Demmert stated that suggestions coming from this conference should not be pie in sky or unreachable recommendations. I concur. We must focus on specific tasks; reachable goals; and, of course, sound research. We can accomplish a great deal if we take one task at a time. Let us take some time, put our heads together and come forth with a unified voice on specific directions for Native education and particularly on research for Native education.

We are not completely in the dark, however. Things that have worked in Alaska have been suggested by McBeath and others. Now is the time to put those concepts to the test. For example, does increased "time on task" generally produce higher achievement for Native students? This concept can be reproduced under a variety of conditions and repeated several times to confirm findings. Once this is accomplished, other concepts, one at a time, can be explored. The answer is to limit our research in order that it can be explored thoroughly.

Thank you.

---

[5]McBeath, Gerald A., Bill McDiarmid, Carl E. Shepro, Judith Kleinfeld, and Dean Coon, Achievement and School Effectiveness: Three Case Studies, Fairbanks, Alaska, July 1982.

COMMISSIONER'S STUDY GROUP ON NATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Christina M. Reagle
Office of Research and Assessment
Alaska Department of Education

The Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement (CSGNA) was formed under the auspices of former Commissioner Lind and the Department of Education in February 1982. The purpose of the group was to study and propose recommendations to Commissioner Lind on possible and realistic methods or means of improving Native achievement throughout the state. During the initial meeting of the group, eight goals were established to give them guidance and direction in making recommendations to the Commissioner. A review of the Statewide Assessment Test results showed that a majority of Native students scored at least 30 percent under their non-Native counterparts, a conclusion that necessitated further investigation.

Included here, with a description of the eight goals, is a current status report of accomplishments that have occurred during the first year of the CSGNA's existence.

Goal 1. They have reviewed the effective schooling reports. Because of the broad spectrum of content found in the effective schooling literature, the CSGNA developed a method for "prioritizing" and reaching consensus for focusing their efforts. Their top priority is effecting the perceptions of parents and teachers on student expectations.

Goal 2. They commissioned a study on successful rural schools. The study identified three predominantly Native schools which are considered successful. The results were published in Achievement and School Effectiveness: Three Case Studies, by McBeath, et al., which was completed in July 1982.

Goal 3. The CSGNA is supporting a video project conducted by a graduate student, Christina Reagle, from the University of Alaska on raising expectations of Native students.

Goal 4. Members of the CSGNA have discussed their concerns about teacher training programs with the University of Alaska President and several staff members at the different campuses, including X-CED program.

Goal 5. The Department has continued to support the CSGNA's activities and the CSGNA has continued utilizing the Department's resources. The CSGNA Chairperson consults with the Commissioner of Education on a regular basis.

Goal 6. Progress has been made towards recommendations on (a) teacher certification, (b) bilingual-bicultural program regulations, and (c) early childhood education. Members of the CSGNA have also met with the Legislature on the Mt. Edgecumbe concerns.

Goal 7. The CSGNA has reviewed the assessment instrument for cultural bias, difficulty, and appropriateness. They identified only one bias item,

which was at the fourth grade level, and considered all other items appropriate and of reasonable difficulty.

Goal 8. Two Native educators have been assigned to the assessment content panels. Linda Swanson of Tanana has been appointed to the mathematics content panel and Eleanor Laughlin of Circle has been appointed to the reading content panel.

Members of the Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement are teachers and administrators from around the state. The group is chaired by Toni Mallott. Other members include Patsy Aamodt, Barrow; Sasha Soboleff, Hydaburg; Jeanmarie Crumb, Anchorage; Tim Samson, Kipnuk; and Ed Thomas, Ketchikan. There are two liaison representatives, Toni Jones for the University of Alaska and Al Hazelton for the Department of Education.

The Commissioner's Study Group on Native Achievement has been pleased to see progress made on each of the three recommendations addressed in Goal 6:

(a) Teacher Certification. The Department of Education's State Professional Development Steering Committee and the University of Alaska have worked closely together to again offer the Orientation to New Teachers class and an Experienced Teachers Institute this summer at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. There is also a research project being conducted on the characteristics of effective teachers in rural settings.

(b) Bilingual-bicultural education is of primary importance to the CSGNA. Oftentimes, language and arts and crafts have been the only programs stressed in bilingual-bicultural programs. The CSGNA would like to see educators blend these important aspects into the total perspective of the student's educational program. Several school districts are requiring units on the Alaska Native Land Claims and other Native studies units. An underlying concern of the CSGNA is to build and maintain support for the underachieving, limited-English proficient students.

(c) Early Childhood Education. The CSGNA feels that early childhood education is a basic foundation for effective schooling. Currently, revisions of the statewide early childhood regulations are in the process of being reviewed and updated. It is a difficult task since the needs of the rural communities are so different from the urban centers.

The primary intent of the video project mentioned in Goal 3 is to address the issue of how to raise the self-esteem of Native students, thus increasing their expectations of themselves. It is felt that the continued low scores on assessment tests, standardized tests, and individual classroom performance evaluations contribute to students' insecurity. The title of the video tape is "You CAN Make Things Happen," which speaks to the fact that students have the capabilities of making things happen for themselves. Parents and teachers have the responsibility to assist students in accepting this challenge and provide a network of support in learning the opportunities that can present themselves. The tape will describe some of the obstacles

that young people are confronted with and the confusion that can occur when expectations of teachers, parents, and students are different. In order to receive a statewide perspective from the three groups (teachers, parents, and students), interviews are being conducted with people from various locations around the state. The ultimate outcome for any individual's education should be the opportunity to reach his/her maximum potential and become involved in a lifestyle conducive to his/her personal philosophy.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations from each of the discussion groups, chaired by presentors, were reviewed by the participants of the conference. The following is a summary of their recommendations:

Culture and Identity

1. A focus on the cultural heritage of Southeast Alaska Native groups served by the schools should be an integral part of the educational process.

2. Resources for developing culturally relevant material need to be brought together to identify those things important to schooling and the Southeast Alaska Native's cultural identity.

3. That the vital theme of the conference be continued through activities of a similar type on an annual basis.

Family Responsibilities in the Educational Process

1. Review and disseminate early childhood education research results supporting home-based approaches which convince parents of their crucial role in the education of their children.

2. Enhance and increase parent involvement in existing early childhood programs. Encourage cooperation between home-based and center-based programs such as Head Start.

3. Utilize ideas from existing programs such as the Yakima school district-wide early childhood home-based program.

4. Utilize the media to inform the public about home-based early childhood programs.

5. Provide preschool education through the parent cooperative model where parents take turns working alongside the professional teacher and where parents are the school directors.

6. Make workshops available to parents which include topics such as values clarification in terms of Native culture.

7. Teach the importance of early childhood education and parenting in high school as part of the curriculum.

8. Encourage continuous support-type parent education: parents with children of similar ages meeting at frequent intervals as children grow from babies to teenagers (e.g., Lamaze groups continuing to meet after childbirth).

9. Offer Native culture programs to preschool children. Follow up by making cultural programs mandatory in the early grades.

10. Continue the idea of parent responsibility for the child's education as children move into the institutionalized school settings.

11. Encourage parent involvement in education by establishing parent contact with school boards, parent committees, teachers, and other parents.

12. Plan strategies to develop policies for programs that encourage parent involvement. Work with local school boards, the State Board of Education, Legislature, city councils, borough assemblies, civic organizations, etc.

The Curriculum

1. The consolidation of existing materials and the development of new materials needed to implement curricula in Southeast Native culture at all educational levels.

2. The establishment of a process of review, authentication, and approval of all cultural materials by Native elders.

3. The implementation of a strategy of curriculum development involving all concerned elements of the community, e.g., families, social agencies, schools, Native organizations.

4. That the State Board of Education adopt a policy statement approving the inclusion of Native studies in the general curriculum.

5. That the Governor at the cabinet level include the responsibility for the inclusion of Native culture in the curriculum.

6. That instruction in Native culture be included in teacher training programs in Alaska.

7. That evaluation and follow-up procedures be developed to monitor the implementation of Native culture in the general curriculum.

8. That the State Board of Education insure that alcohol, drug abuse, and suicide prevention programs be incorporated into the K-12 curriculum.

9. That an initiative be sponsored for a constitutional amendment recognizing the contribution of the Alaskan Native cultures and supporting the preservation of these cultures.

Effective Schooling in a Cross-Cultural Setting

1. The Native community needs to continue the age-old practice of instilling pride and a positive self-image among its young--and where that process is no longer practiced, start again.

2. Begin looking at characteristics of successful teachers in Southeast Alaska and isolate and analyze those characteristics that appear to be important.

3. Undertake and analyze case studies of schools that were successful in educating Native students—Mt. Edgecumbe and Sheldon Jackson.

4. Implement training programs, both inservice and preservice, so that teachers are better prepared to work with the Native community.

5. Inform parents about those things that are important to establishing a strong learning base among young children.

6. Develop cultural curricula and relevant material and information, cutting across grades and subject matter.

The Role of Private Colleges

1. Private colleges are an important alternative to state schools, especially as they address special needs larger institutions have problems adjusting to. The continuation of private colleges should be supported.

2. Private colleges should focus on the special educational needs of Native Alaskans, developing programs that strengthen their cultural identity, provide opportunities for new/broader educational opportunities and focus on problem areas.

Educational Problems and Strategies for Change

1. Develop a program in teacher training that will focus on rural Native students and a curriculum that is designed to provide much of the training in the village environment.

2. Develop a program for parent education that will focus on the importance of incorporating cultural values in young children.

3. Develop a research agenda that will provide information on Native student learning styles, performance, interaction, and leadership styles exhibited.

4. Develop training opportunities for teachers that will allow them to learn more about the cultures, aspirations, home environment, and needs of the students they teach.

5. Develop a curriculum in the public schools that will provide a more accurate and appropriate picture of the Southeast Alaska Native community.

V. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The Southeastern Alaska Conference on Native Education was a success. The people in attendance represented a variety of communities: professional and paraprofessionals from rural villages, representatives from the State Department of Education, faculty representing the University of Alaska, and Native leaders

Of key importance were the recommendations that were developed, the dialogue that took place, the themes that surfaced, and the general attitude that things could be done to improve educational opportunities for Native children. There was a general consensus among the Native participants that this kind of conference needed to be repeated.

In retrospect, a year and a half later, it is important to note that several things have occurred in the Alaska scene. These activities may or may not have any direct relationship with the conference, but the timing was good. First of all, the State Board of Education and the University of Alaska's Board of Regents have declared rural education a priority and have created a joint subcommittee to hold meetings for the purpose of discussing problems and future policy regarding how to improve quality. The Alaska Federation of Natives held a conference on rural education. The State Department of Education held a Rural Education Conference. The Alaska Native Brotherhood/Sisterhood's 1984 annual convention had as its theme Native education. The creation of an internal blue ribbon education committee for Natives of Southeastern Alaska has been created. The Legislature passed special legislation for funding and training rural teachers. The University of Alaska's Center for Teacher Education has revised its program to be more responsive to the needs of rural teachers. Finally, several research activities were conducted during the past two years that focus on rural education for Natives.

The important themes of early childhood education; the importance of the family role in education; the importance of cultural integrity and a positive self-image; relevant curriculum; and, finally, the importance of character and morality all surfaced. There is much to accomplish with each of these themes, and there are people around willing to begin doing something about them.